

# grip

Fall 2008

## Accidental lesson

A collision taught me a bit about life

## PLUS!

Games, quizzes, poems, reviews and more

## Addictions

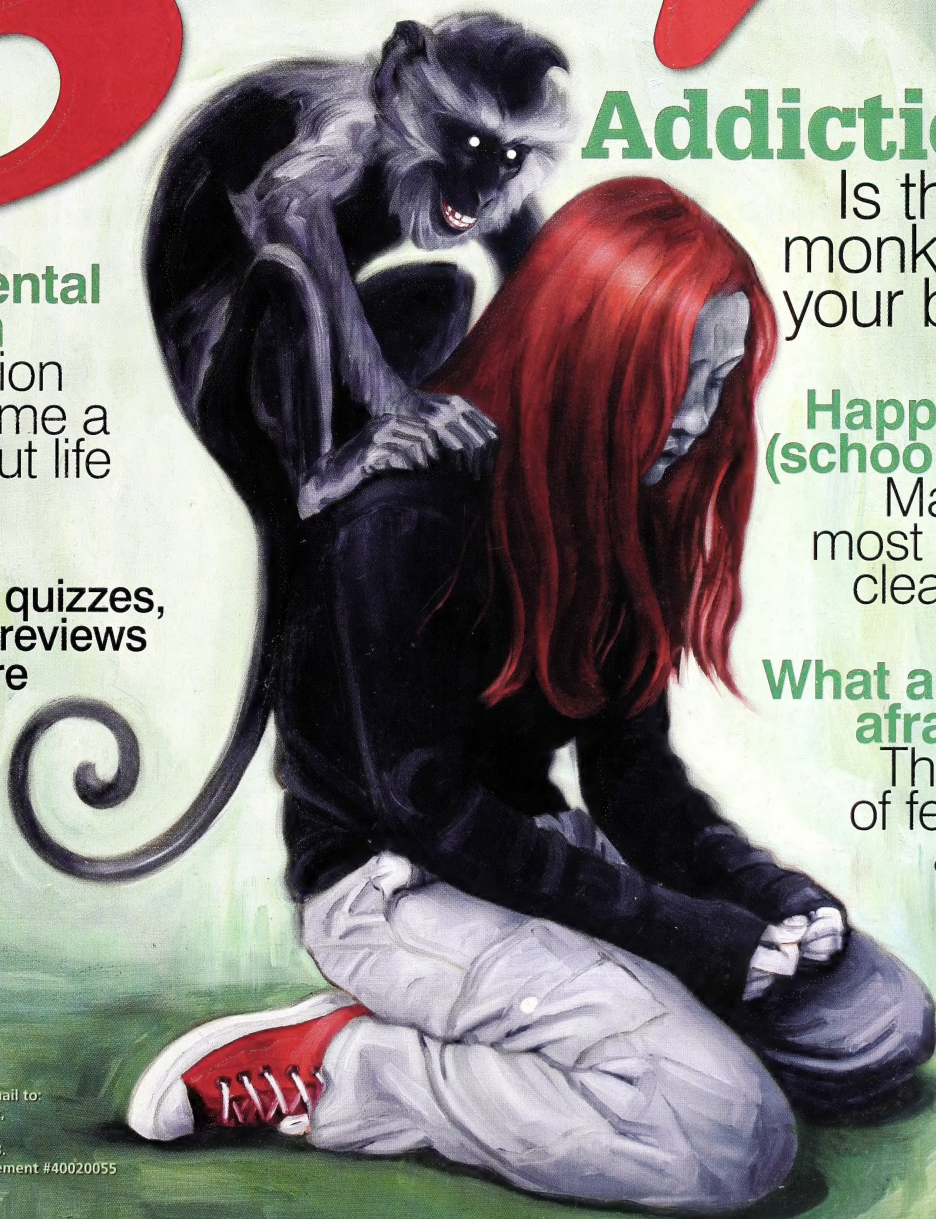
Is there a monkey on your back?

## Happy New (school) Year

Make the most of your clean slate

## What are you afraid of?

The roots of fear and anxiety



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**I'm all that:** Improve your self-esteem with these easy tips



# This man is going to tell you how to deal with your life?

OK,

the only people who may know

**SOMETHING**

about what's going ON in your LIFE would be other TEENS and then, ONLY if they hang out with you and SOMETIMES that's not even the case,

**especially** when your

FRIENDS are completely

OUT TO LUNCH

and some of your PROBLEMS are very SERIOUS. So why don't you get OFF your BUTT and WRITE something yourself? You could get PUBLISHED, it may make you FAMOUS and then you can have your own PERFUME or something just as LAME, but it will make you MILLIONS.

## Grip. It's your life. Grab it.

Grip magazine is currently seeking writers, illustrators, animators, poets – creative types of all kinds – between the ages of 13 and 18. Articles, poetry, short stories, illustrations, comic strips and photography will be considered. Send questions and samples to [creative@griponlife.ca](mailto:creative@griponlife.ca). You will be paid. Really. Not a lot, but it's still money.

[griponlife.ca](http://griponlife.ca)





# what's inside FEATURES

**Welcome to Addiction**  
Is your life going up in smoke? How to tell when your recreational habits have gone a Wii bit too far

## Why I Stay Sober

For this Alberta teen, sobriety is the savviest, sexiest thing going

BY JOSÉE GULAYETS

## No Smoking? No Kidding

Everyone knows cigarettes are bad for you. So why do teens take it up?

FILES FROM ALLISON MCPHAIL

## Band Aid

Whitecourt-based metal band, the Blessed Pariah, gets all sober on us

BY SHELLEY ASTILL

## Ten Rungs Down

Addictions can rob you of everything. Here's a list of 10 varieties

BY CAITLIN HART

## Detox Dialogue

Should there be safe injection sites for drug addicts in Alberta? *Grip* assigned two teens to argue the opposite sides of a pointed problem

BY SAMANTHA MARCELLIN AND MADELAINE LONGMAN

## It's Cleanup Time

It might not be the first time you've tried to get clean. But it might be the last time

BY REBECCA SCHAEFFER

## Top 6 Ways to Help

Have a friend with problems? Here are six ways to be a good pal

BY SARAH CULKIN

## Leaving the Lockers Behind

Looking back at Grade 12, one student realizes she'll miss it.

PLUS: Tips for surviving high school

BY STEPHANIE SMITH

## Fan Fare: A Lot to Love

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BY ROSY LEE

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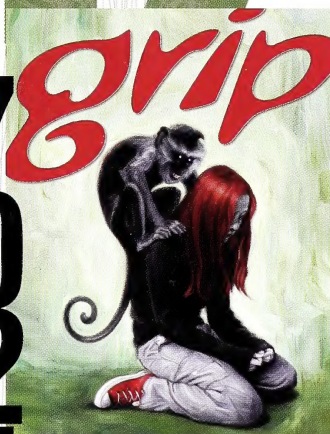
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BY JENA TANG

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You want a fulfilled life? You need a sense of your own worth. Here's how to improve your self-esteem

BY TERESA KWON

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Is an elephant scared of a mouse? Dunno, but in time for Halloween, find out why humans get scared

BY STEPHANIE SMITH

## This is: Mustafa and Hazal Babadagli

These twins have turned their high school lab research over to grad students

BY VIVIAN LEE

## Start Fresh

September is the time to reinvent yourself, and go from being a geek to a goddess, or from bully to best behaved

BY MEGAN RYLAND

## When Words Fall Short

Art therapy can ease pain or achieve understanding. Here's how it works

BY SCAACHI KOUL





# IVmessage

## From the Youth Advisory Council

**C**oming out of high school, and not going to college right away left me wondering "where and how do I stay involved?" All throughout high school, I was busy planning and helping out wherever I could. Then came the time to step out into the real world, and I was at a loss.

First things first, I needed to line up a full-time job. After that was accomplished, I needed something to occupy my spare time. I remembered something one of my old teachers had told me about *Grip* magazine, so I decided to check it out. I had done a lot of writing for our local paper and had been on so many different committees in school. So I figured by applying to be on the Youth Advisory Council for *Grip*, it would help keep me involved in both. Once accepted, I learned that I was right, and was happy to be offered this great experience.

I feel *Grip* magazine is a great publication. It gives teenagers an understanding of what goes on in life and what struggles other teens have been through. I do believe that many teens learn something about themselves or something they were too afraid to ask by reading this publication.

In this issue, *Grip* is featuring articles and information about addictions. Story topics include early warning signs, addictions counselling, addiction in the family, teens who choose not to drink, smoking, how to help a friend, and many more.

In every high school, there are the teens that have some sort of addiction. There are addictions in some families, and some people have close friends that have a problem with addictions. Unfortunately there is no way of escaping the hideous truths and pain about addictions. Fortunately there are many experienced people to help, whether they're former addicts themselves or concerned family members or friends.

This issue will help you to determine what an addict is, how you can pick up on signs, and how to seek help.

Jessica Cameron  
*Grip* Youth Advisory Council

## From Alberta Health Services/AMHB

**W**elcome back to *Grip* – the magazine written by youth for youth. By the time you read this, the new school year will have already begun. Likely, it brought with it some changes for you, like a move to a different school, meeting new friends or joining an extracurricular activity. Well, changes are also happening here at *Grip*.

First, you'll notice that I'm new to this magazine. My name is Ken Hughes, and I am the chairman of Alberta Health Services (AHS), the entity that the Alberta Mental Health Board has now joined. Since I was appointed to this position, I've had the opportunity to familiarize myself with some of the great things that are going on in the health system, including projects such as *Grip*. I'm glad to have the opportunity to join you on the pages of this innovative magazine.

Our theme for this issue is addiction. When we talk about addictions, the first thing you probably think about is alcohol or drugs. But there's increasing evidence to show that other types of addictions can also affect youth. On the whole, teens are spending more time playing video games and less time playing sports. The proliferation of online poker rooms has made it easier to gamble. Our society is getting heavier and heavier, as people struggle with food addictions.

While video games and food are not "bad" things, when taken to an extreme, it can become a problem. "Everything in moderation" is a good mantra to apply to things.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Grip*. Share your opinions of it on our website – [www.griponlife.ca](http://www.griponlife.ca). See you in the next issue!

Ken Hughes  
Chairman  
Alberta Health Services



**APPLY NOW!** We still have a few spots left on the *Grip* Youth Advisory Council.  
Make your mark. Visit [griponlife.ca](http://griponlife.ca) for details.



# ***grip***

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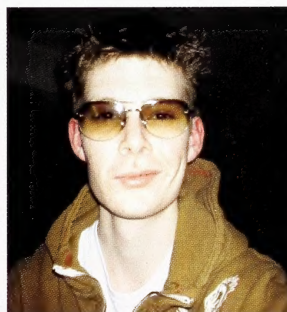


"Everyone calls me 'Shell' for short," **Shelley Astill** writes.

It figures they'd call her that, because she loves the beach. But she doesn't love all water-dwellers equally. "The worst food in the world is raw octopus tentacle. Not only is it squishy, if you don't eat it right the octopus suction cup will stick to the inside of your mouth." Shell's feature appears on page 24.

If she could be famous for anything,

**Lisa Allen** reckons she'd be a painter. "It's because I love to paint and always explore different styles." She adds that she's happy she'll be going to university. "It'll allow me to become everything I can be," she says. Everything except an olive eater, anyway. "Olives are the worst food in the world." Check out Lisa's review on page 13.



If he were a famous painter, **Jarrod Weisner** figures he'd be Salvador Dali. A famous filmmaker? He'd be Stanley Kubrick – just because both men were great at what they did. Jarrod would never be a vegetarian, because he doesn't want to lose any weight. "I already weigh the same as a puppy," he says. One place he'll visit is Germany, for Oktoberfest. Read Jarrod's review on page 12.





## Recommended

By Greg Hudson

**"I** recommend *Invincible* comics. Invincible is a comic book character that basically melds the powers of Superman with the personality of a young Spider-Man. He's the son of a major superhero and he has to deal with average adolescent problems, along with superhuman ones.

"And frankly, comic books don't get enough press. I know there are teens out there who like them, and probably feel ashamed for it. At least I did. So ashamed I quit when I was 13, like it was a bad habit. I only recently started having the confidence to admit that, yes, I could be young and hip and still like a good comic book every now and then. So check out *Invincible*."

[www.imagecomics.com/iconline.php?title=invincible\\_001&page=cover&resize=now](http://www.imagecomics.com/iconline.php?title=invincible_001&page=cover&resize=now)

Do you have something to recommend, comics or otherwise?  
Send it [creative@griponlife.ca](mailto:creative@griponlife.ca) along with your picture.  
We'll pay actual money if your submission is selected!

## Still Time to Enter

Get your creative engines running. Develop a 30- to 60-second television or radio commercial supporting addictions awareness.

Help Alberta Health Services/AADAC celebrate National Addictions Awareness Week (NAAW) by submitting entries to the Addictions-Free Commercial contest. There are prizes available to winners in several different age categories.

Entrants need to be Edmonton and area residents. The deadline to submit is October 31, 2008 and winners will be announced at the NAAW 'scars (rhymes with Oscars), a red-carpet ceremony at Edmonton City Hall on November 21 from 7 to 9 p.m.

Download the contest information details at [www.aadac.com/documents/naaw-commercial\\_contest.pdf](http://www.aadac.com/documents/naaw-commercial_contest.pdf) or contact Denise Salanski-Cleveland at 780-644-3639 or [denise.salanski-cleveland@aadac.gov.ab.ca](mailto:denise.salanski-cleveland@aadac.gov.ab.ca).

## To High School We Go

By Michelle Truong

Going into Grade 9, I was filled with excitement, but at the back of my mind, I knew I'd soon be faced with a few decisions. What high school should I go to? Then, after deciding that, what courses should I take? Should I take the normal stream of courses or go into the International Baccalaureate program? What about Advanced Placement? Faced with these life-changing decisions, who wouldn't stress out?

There are three factors that can affect your choice of high school. First, there's location. Students tend to go to schools that are close to their homes. Second, there's the program a particular school offers. Many high schools are targeted to a certain area of study, such as arts, sports or academics. Your interests can determine which school you go to. The third factor is your friends. It's only natural that you'd all want to go to the same school. When you head to high school, knowing a few of your peers helps give you a boost of confidence.

After gathering information on high schools and attending high school open houses and conferences, it comes down to filling out that all-important application form. And you have to take the time to choose what courses you'd like. If you have a semi-clear idea of a career path, it's helpful for choosing your courses. Some teachers recommend taking the highest course level that you can possibly handle, in an effort to keep your options open, in terms of college and university.

I'm sure that at some point, everyone's wanted to turn back time. If you're in Grade 10 at a new school and you don't see many familiar faces, you might second-guess your choices. Perhaps you and your junior high friends will remain close, or you might never see them again. My advice would be to treasure those moments that you have with friends. Make the most out of every day. But make the best decision for your future and don't spend time regretting it.

The step to high school is a big one. You have more independence, but you have to work hard. However, aside from school work, high school provides more extracurricular activities, which in turn can translate into fun. High school is a place to meet new people and to try new things. And after all, life is what you make it.



# Constant Cravings

**S**ometimes you feel like you're addicted to Pop Tarts, your best friend, or vintage episodes of *Three's Company*. After 24 hours of all three you're as bloated as a 1970s Elvis Presley impersonator. But you're probably not truly actually addicted to Jack, Chrissy and Janet. What you have is a habit, or even a strong liking, for eating junk and watching old reruns on TV with the BFF. A habit is just your typical way of doing things, which can still be hard to break, but won't require rehab.

If you must watch *Three's Company* every day at 3 p.m. or else you think your cat will die, or your heart will stop, you are still not an addict. But you may have a compulsion, an irresistible urge to do something irrational despite the consequences (say, eyestrain, or job loss from phoning in sick to watch TV).

Addictions are complicated, and defined as a physical or psychological attachment to a substance, such as alcohol or drugs, that is beyond the person's control despite the fact that it causes them or others harm. Addictions are considered a chronic illness, with genetic, psychosocial and environmental factors. If you were really addicted to *Three's Company* you'd be so dependant that *not* watching Jack at regular intervals would lead to uncontrollable cravings, crying, sweating, vomiting, paranoia, depression, aggression, possible loss of bowel control, hallucinations and many other delightful symptoms.

Not all addicts are sitting on the sidewalk in crummy clothes begging for change. They may be extremely functional, loving people who hold down jobs, get good grades or keep clean houses. No one plans to have an alcohol, drug or gambling problem when they start drinking or using drugs at a party, or going to the casino on weekends. Often it is the friends, co-workers and loved ones who see a problem developing first. Which is why, in episode 19, Jack was the first to notice Janet had a drinking problem. He sat down with her to talk about it and he and Chrissy got Janet some help.

All right, we made that up. But if you or someone you know has an addiction, that's what you should do: talk about the problem, and seek professional help.

Call the AADAC Help Line at 1-866-33AADAC.



## My Dusty Bookshelf



By Teresa Kwon  
*Go Ask Alice*  
Written by  
Anonymous

Her world turns upside down when she grabs a Coca-Cola bottle at a party. What she doesn't know is that the bottle she holds contains LSD, a hallucinogenic drug that disrupts sexual behaviour, mood,

and sensory perception. After the initial pleasurable experience, she has a difficult time resisting the drug and later proceeds to marijuana, amphetamines and casual sex. She even goes out with a drug dealer in order to secure a sufficient quantity of drugs. As her drug addiction deepens, she steps further into the darkness to a point where she can't get out. Later she finds herself struggling to restart her life and become a normal teen but her dark past keeps luring her into using drugs once again.

This novel is supposedly a real, late-1960s era diary of a teenage girl who died of a drug overdose. Even though the diary itself is outdated, the novel reminds us of the consequences of even one small action. Not only does the novel portray the protagonist's addiction to drugs, it also portrays her anxiety, pain, and several unbearable situations most teens would have a tough time making it through.

This old book is shocking and very effective. You will get chills down your back, guaranteed.



# Meet Generation Rx



- Twenty per cent of American teens have abused prescription pain killers, many dipping into the family medicine chest to steal
- More teens have abused a prescription painkiller than have used ecstasy, cocaine, crack or LSD
- An American study says that nearly 10 per cent of teens have abused over-the-counter products such as cough medicine
- Talwin and Ritalin are prescription drugs that, used together, are called poor-man's heroin. Alberta has a triplicate prescription program to make it harder for addicted people to get these drugs
- Side effects of crystal meth (amphetamines): feelings of power and superiority, hostility and aggression; delusions; hallucinations; high fever; delirium; seizures; coma; stroke; heart failure; death. Meth with other drugs or alcohol is more dangerous

## Spot the Diffs

Hey, Eagle Eyes. There are 10 differences between the image on the left and the one on the right. Can you find them all?





# WS

## Beijing Summer Olympics, By the Numbers

There were **14,000** performers wowing the audience at the opening ceremonies of the Beijing Summer Olympics

And **91,000** spectators watched in the stands of the National Stadium

On TVs around the world, more than **840 million** saw the ceremonies

Chen Xiexia of China broke an Olympic record to lift **212 kg** in women's weightlifting

The "Baltimore Bullet," Michael Phelps scored an unprecedented **8** gold medals for his efforts in the pool

Phelps put back **12,000** calories a day during training, **6** times more than the average man his age

## Are You a caf-FRIEND?

Have you heard? Starbucks is opening a brand new location – in its own bathroom. OK, it's a lame-o joke, but it the truth is, the popular coffee chain has locations everywhere you turn, and it's not the only one. Coffee – or rather, its active ingredient, caffeine – is one of Alberta's most popular, and arguably, least damaging drugs. But it is a drug and it is addictive.

A couple of cups of coffee (about 200 mg of caffeine) can make you feel sharper. Temporarily, it improves your mental and physical abilities. Runners know that a cuppa beforehand makes for a good run. A little caffeine – say, a couple of cups of coffee – has no known negative effects in a healthy adult.

But it's a little more complicated. Most coffee isn't sold per cup (a cup being 8 oz., or 250 mL). At Starbucks, for example, ordering a "short" will get you an even cup. If you order a "grande," you're actually getting two cups. And some types of coffee pack more caffeine per millilitre than others.


Too much caffeine makes many people cranky, shaky, fidgety and restless. You might experience a rapid, pounding heartbeat and the need to use the bathroom, like, now. The drug can interfere with sleep and give you stomachaches.

Caffeine also decreases iron and calcium absorption, but can help pain relievers take effect – that's why it's an ingredient in some. It's also an ingredient in some diet pills, but doesn't suppress your appetite at all. And it has never, in the history of the cappuccino, been shown to sober up a drunk person.

People should avoid coffee if they have an anxiety disorder, very high blood pressure, if they're pregnant or if they have stomach or digestive problems.

As with any drug, your system gradually needs more and more caffeine for the same effect. But when you increase your intake, you increase the risk of those icky side effects. You become dependent on caffeine after regular, moderate use. If you suddenly stop using, you can get caffeine withdrawal, which includes headaches, sleep disruption, irritability and depression. Withdrawal sets in anytime after 12 hours since your last cup. The good news? Symptoms are self-limiting, lasting only a few days. There's no need to book into a treatment facility.

### How much caffeine is in that



Coffee (1 cup) – 40-180 mg
Decaffeinated Coffee (1 cup) – 2-5 mg
Tea (1 cup) – 10-110 mg
Stimulants (1 tablet) – 100-250 mg
Painkillers (1 tablet) – 30-100 mg
Cola drinks (12 oz/355 mL) – 30-60 mg
Dark Chocolate (2 oz/56 g) – 40-50 mg
Milk Chocolate (2 oz/56 g) – 3-20 mg

Source: Alberta Health Services/AADAC





## Entertainment, Unplugged

Don't tell your folks you like reading; it will spoil the fun. In the meantime, check out these books

### Mud Girl

By Alison Acheson

REVIEWED BY CALLA WRIGHT

Aba Zytka Jones (Abi) was 16 years old when her mother ran away, leaving her to care for her father, who then sank into deep depression. Now, a year later, Abi has questions that get more complicated after a woman named Mary from the Big Sister organization tries to become her friend. She is gentle and cheery, with a love for knitting and fireworks, but she also seems to know more about Abi's father than she lets on.



Furthermore, the cute guy Abi watches through the blackberry bushes, Jude, has taken an interest in her. At first things seem idyllic, but then she meets Jude's two-year-old son, Dyl. His grandmother usually takes care of him, but she is gravely ill. Ultimately, this book is about a girl falling in love, but not in the ways she expects. With a beautiful and unique cast of characters, this is a sweet story about love and what it takes to be a parent.

**Grade: B** / enjoyed this story because of the relationships

between the characters and the way it doesn't have a perfect ending.

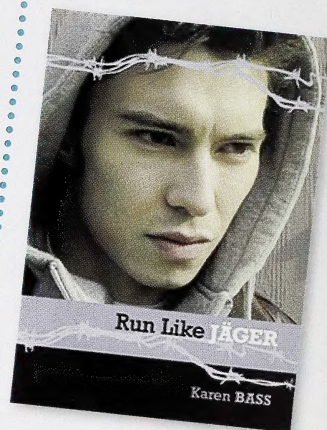
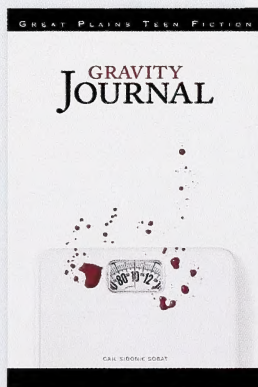
### Gravity Journal

By Gail Sidonie Sobat

REVIEWED BY NADIA FATAH

Sixteen-year-old Anise weighs only 96 pounds and is being hospitalized for the second time for anorexia. Anise also harms herself, believing it's the only thing that makes her feel better and escape her twisted life. Her brother Marcel is the only one she can confide in, who truly understands her and her condition. Her parents, referred to as "the units," are wealthy and hard to please. Anise feels she is not good enough to be their daughter. She calls her mother the "Loathed" and her father the "Witless Parent." But her life brightens when she meets Boyd, a man with bipolar disorder across the hall, who is five years older than she is. Slowly Anise starts taking her anorexia more seriously as her brother Marcel becomes a mess and needs his sister more than ever. She tries to help him but he starts using crystal meth and comes to Anise asking for money. When Anise refuses, he pulls away and she's afraid she might have lost him for good. When her brother ends up almost overdosing on drugs, Anise starts to crumble.

**Grade: A+** Gravity Journal is one of those books you can't put down until you're finished. I found it very descriptive, and it made me feel as if I was there. I simply loved it.



### Run Like Jäger

By Karen Bass

REVIEWED BY JENA TANG

The rage of war has greatly affected Kurt Schreiber despite the fact that he has never witnessed its fury beyond textbooks and TV documentaries. His grandfather was a soldier in the Second World War, but this still leaves Kurt feeling in the dark about war's potential for destruction. His grandfather remains unconvinced as to why he should relay the stories of his past. However, when Kurt travels to Germany, his curiosity drives him to investigate various aspects of the battles from his grandfather's past. His discoveries are assisted by Herr Brandt, his grandfather's childhood friend. Brandt's graphic stories are punctuated in the novel by Kurt's own concerns. He struggles with an infatuation, threats from bullies and a new love of the sport of running. As Kurt is faced with the atrocities of war and the aspects he shares with his grandfather—strength, determination and his knowing smile—he begins to learn the difference between courage and weakness. But his new realizations begin to overwhelm him.

**Grade: C** I found this novel to be instructive and an alternative to history books. The author's use of imagery and plot form a unique story that entertains as it informs. I liked this novel but I wasn't completely captivated.





## Thought Bubbles

This concert was a graphic example of a classic great time



### ***Flight of the Tiger Moth***

By Mary Woodbury

REVIEWED BY CAITLIN HART

This book centres on a boy living during the Second World War in a small town in Saskatchewan. Jack loves to fly planes and even tries on his own a couple times, even though he's too young. Then, a new airbase brings British pilots to Jack's town, some of whom he befriends. Along the way, Jack rescues a puppy, hangs out with his friends, gets picked on by the town's resident bully and even develops a bit of a crush on his friend's older sister.

The language is simple and easy to read, as is the plot. There aren't many characters or facts you need to keep track of. I found this book a bit dull. The storyline is very simple and doesn't include the kind of action that you might expect in a war-themed book. The plot mainly discusses everyday life in a boring town and Jack rescuing this silly little puppy and his mother not allowing him to keep it. Though the story's narrator is meant to be a 16-year-old boy, the voice makes it sound much more like a 10-year-old girl.

**Grade: D** You might want to check this one out from the library before you buy it. I wouldn't recommend it unless you're desperate.

### ***Iron Maiden Comes to Edmonton***

Samantha Marcellin

THE DAY WAS JUNE 6, 2008, but more importantly it was the day metal band Iron Maiden came to rock Edmonton's socks off. I tapped my pen restlessly on my desk, waiting for the final school bell to ring and I was out of there before it even finished. Rexall Place, the biggest venue in the city, was definitely the best choice for this band. When I got there, I saw a throng of black-clad, shaggy-haired fans milling, thicker than mud, around the stadium. One guy brought his electric guitar and played Maiden songs next to a homemade sign that read: "Diehard Fan Playing for Ticket!!"

When I got in I headed straight for the tables of "merch," where the rules of a mosh pit apply: if you're big, you're going to get a T-shirt a lot faster. On the other hand, if you are small and fast, it's not hard to weave and push your way to the front. After making my purchases, I headed to my seat. The lights dimmed and we all sat in anticipation of the opening act. Immediately, a strong sense of confusion filled the air. The opening act was Iron Maiden bass player Steve Harris's daughter. She was way too dippy and light to be opening for one of the most influential metal acts in the world. Even her bandmates seemed to want to be somewhere else. They finally left the stage and we prepared ourselves for the main event. We watched as the stage was transformed into an Egyptian theme, which fit with the Somewhere Back in Time tour. Slowly the lights dimmed again and screens lit up with the video for *Aces High*, and then there was no going back. Everyone in the entire arena jumped up and sang along with lead singer Bruce Dickinson at full volume. It's obvious why Dickinson is a legendary front man: his high energy performance and crazy, happy attitude are infectious, and it was hard not to love the costume changes that accompanied many of the songs. At one point, a camera-man came out to present Iron Maiden with an award, and because they were on tour they had to accept it via video. Dickinson grabbed the camera and told us to yell, to show how great a time we were having.

The overall performance was a brilliant mixture of beloved classics and rockin' new tracks. The great thing about Iron Maiden is that when they play a show, they seem to love every minute of it as much as the fans do. There is no vibe that performing is work for them. When their most famous live song started, *Fear of the Dark*, it was wicked to have more lighters swaying than cellphones glowing. After nearly two hours of rip-roaring music and one short conversation about birds from Dickinson, they thanked us and said goodbye. But we knew they would be right back, and we were right; minutes later they were on the stage again, with an amazing three-song encore. I left satisfied, but I know I will always want more. Iron Maiden has set the bar for every other show I'll see.





## Pop, Alt and More

Tune into or turn off some all-time tunage, as per our reviewers

### **Juno (the soundtrack)**

By Various Artists

REVIEWED BY PAIGE PARSONS

Much like the movie, the soundtrack CD for *Juno* is off-beat and quirky. It's a compilation of cool indie jams, a couple of rock songs and some very odd tracks, which makes for a lighthearted and unique album. Together, the songs make up a rather diverse compilation, with the only common feature being that they are all relatively unknown and unusual. Songstress Kimya Dawson has a number of her songs featured on the album. Her style is quite alternative, and tracks like *My Rollercoaster* and *Vampire* are somewhat ridiculous and nonsensical but nevertheless entertaining. My personal favourite is *Anyone Else But You* by Michael Cera and Ellen Page. I actually prefer their version to the original version by the Moldy Peaches. There is something very



Re



endearing about the musical styling of these two young actors. I think this soundtrack is more appealing to those who have seen (and liked) the movie. The songs are more meaningful and enjoyable when you can reflect on the original heartwarming film.

**Grade: A** This is not an album for listeners who don't want to stray from mainstream music. However, if you are trying to diversify your musical palette or feel like rockin' it out, indie style, this is the CD for you.

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### **Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends**

By Coldplay

REVIEWED BY JARROD ROBERT WEISNER

When Coldplay announced in early 2006 that they were releasing a new album, a light seemed to turn on in the studios of alternative rock and rock stations alike. Was this going to be another success or a repeat? Well, the CD is out and it is as mind-altering as the opening piano riff from their 2002 hit single, *Clocks*. The first single from the new album, *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends*, spread like wildfire on the Internet. *Violet Hill* brings to mind a picnic in a snowbank – a lovely beginning with an astounding finish, as if placing it in the middle of the album was both a crescendo and the beginning of the climax. *Viva la Vida* is reminiscent of an old love song, with a hint of country guitar that bends the mind as far as you let it. After going on a large Latin American tour in 2007, you can see the influence of the culture and people that the band encountered, as if the album were recorded entirely in a cathedral of pious wonder. Songs such as *Strawberry Swing* or *42* introduce you to a brighter side of the band. This new album release is not only breaking sales records, but those who formerly disliked the band are learning to appreciate the new ideas and creativity that flow out of *Viva la Vida*.

**Grade A+** This is the start of something beautiful, and as they've taught us before, they just want someone to listen to what they have to say. Well, we're listening and we like what we hear.

### **Midnight Boom**

By The Kills

Reviewed by  
JOSÉE GULAYETS

However you want to label them – electronica, indie, alternative or blues – The Kills' newest album is great. Their gritty vocals and dirty sound are a welcome relief from the constant bombardment of princess pop I keep hearing at my job. Despite a three-year dry spell, the album cleans up well. Many of the songs, including *Getting Down* and *Sour Cherry*, mix in more electronics than their previous album, *No Wow*, did. They're mixed well, and the sound overall is concise and new. One track that disappoints: *Cheap and Cheerful*. I found it repetitive with bland vocals (and no grit!) – borderline Bif Naked style. In perhaps the slowest track on the album (it's very close to *Goodnight Bad Morning*), we hear Alison Mosshart's distinct raspy vocals matched with a set of smart and witty lyrics. The best track was *Black Balloon*, which easily fell into my favourites play-list. Admittedly, the lyrics caught me before the sound did, but the sound was a very close second.

**Grade: A-** If you're a sucker for unknown but talented alternative, indie, blues or whatever-you'd-like-to-call 'em bands, *Midnight Boom* should definitely be on your list of CDs to pick up.





# views

## Ought To Be In Pictures

Go and be moved by these moving pictures on a rainy day



### Hancock

REVIEWED BY LISA ALLEN

This film is about a rather odd type of superhero, a sort that hasn't been seen before. In the beginning, this superhero has a drinking and attitude problem. Everyone who meets him dislikes him. Eventually, he gets thrown in jail for causing more mayhem than what his superhero "help" is worth. Shortly after he's locked away, the authorities bring him back out because the police can't keep up with the rising crime rate. So, it's Hancock (Will Smith) to the rescue. As a superhero, nothing anyone can do can kill him, or so he thinks.

There are a few twists in this film to redeem the unrealistic tone it takes in the beginning when Hancock bursts onto the set, flying and tossing SUVs around in mid-air. This movie is all about action with a few breaks for family turmoil and the occasional sappy moment. All in all, this film is not too bad, but a bit far-fetched. In the end it's still a superhero movie, where good prevails over evil, but a few kinks are thrown in to keep the audience interested and the hero alive.

**Grade: B** This is not your average superhero movie, but similar to others that have already seen the big screen.



### You Don't Mess With the Zohan

REVIEWED BY JACKSON TSE

Adam Sandler co-wrote and co-produced *You Don't Mess With the Zohan* and he plays the main character. If you've seen Sandler's other movies, you'll know that his silliness often makes the movie memorable, and usually, worth watching. Zohan stars Sandler as a sexually obsessed Israeli counter-terrorist named Zohan Dvir. But his greatest dream in life is to become a hairstylist, and because he is not happy with his life as a Mossad agent, he abandons his mission of tracking down a Palestinian terrorist named the Phantom and fakes his own death. After stowing away in a pet-transport cage, the aspiring hairdresser arrives in America to pursue his dream of making the world "silky smooth" with nothing more than a fashion book dating back to 1987. He also provides a "special" kind of services to the elderly ladies of New York. Much hilarity (not!) ensues. Zohan is a crude film, with almost two hours of agonizing, raunchy cinema and only a little bit of classic Sandler silliness to make it funny. The endless close-ups of his crotch, the awful Middle Eastern accents, the random celebrity cameos and the feeble plot all accumulate into a truly terrible movie. This is definitely not a film to watch with your parents or your younger siblings.

**Grade: E-** Wait for the DVD. If that.





# The Gamer

Get in the game with these *Grip* picks

REVIEWED BY KURIN LAING AND ALLISON MCPHAIL

**Title:** *Oblivion* (Game of the Year edition)

**Platform:** PC

**Rating:** E for everyone

*Oblivion*'s newest expansion was released late last year and is one of the best RPGs (role-playing games) out there. It comes with the original *Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*, *Knights of the Nine* and newest version: *Shimmering Isles*. You start off by creating a character, choosing a race and basic appearance. Further into the game, you are able to choose your class. All of these options are customized. The game play itself is quite fluid, as long as your computer can run it. Then you basically run your character's life, make moral decisions, create alliances and story arcs. The only fly in the ointment is if your computer isn't powerful enough, it can take away from the experience. And some of the game play mechanics need work, such as conversation. You will need a fairly good PC (an 1.8-2 GHz processor and a NVIDIA 6000 series graphic card or higher), but otherwise it is definitely worth the purchase.

**Hint:** Be careful to distinguish enemies from friendly characters. (At one point in a dark dungeon I accidentally killed a fellow adventurer; I was accused of murder and had a bounty on my head.)

**Grade:** **B** *Suitable for expert and amateur players, this is a very good game which mixes classic RPG elements with a first-person perspective.* — K.L.

**Title:** *Last Night on Earth*

**Platform:** Board Game

**Rating:** E for everyone

Want to enact your own zombie horror movie? Well, that's the idea behind Flying Frog's new board game, *Last Night on Earth*. It doesn't become repetitive as there are several scenarios and "hero characters" to choose from, and the board itself is randomly created every game. The game is strategy-based, so young or easily bored players will probably dislike it. Also, because of its rather elaborate nature, the first few attempts are likely to be slow and confusing as you come to understand the game. Until then, expect the zombies to win, as they possess several advantages. Once everyone has grasped the rules and strategy (this will happen faster for players who have experience with RPG-style board games), I recommend moving on to the advanced scenarios. The advantage remains with the zombies unless the heroes maintain a distance, but the extra cards and rules add to the fun.

**Hint:** *Last Night on Earth* is difficult to find. Even if you can avoid shipping costs by buying it locally, your wallet will still be hard hit thanks to numerous small parts and a "soundtrack" CD supposedly intended to improve the experience. Before forking out the cash, make sure this game is for you.

**Grade:** **B-** *This is a really great idea that turned out to be only OK, but that's not to say you won't have fun playing it with the right group of people. If you've got the time to call around to local gaming stores, go ahead and pick it up!* — A.M.



you don't think, **YOU KNOW**  
your cat is talking to you

here's what he's saying:  
[icanhascheezburger.com](http://icanhascheezburger.com)

EVIL STUFF





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TALKING  
TO  
YOU

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Snoop around, take a quiz, stay a while or visit again. It's an eye-opener.

[www.aadac.com/21.asp](http://www.aadac.com/21.asp)

EVERY FIGHT IS A FOOD FIGHT

-WHEN YOU'RE A CANNIBAL

DEMETRI MARTIN

READ THESE BOOKS

*Black Beauty:  
The Autobiography  
of a Horse*  
by Anna Sewall

*The First  
of ~~Midnight~~  
Midnight*

by Marjorie Darke

*"A Tree Grows  
in Brooklyn"*  
by Betty Smith

"One can overcome the forces of negative emotions, like anger and hatred, by cultivating their counterforces, like love and compassion."

- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

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a free game where you, as a gorilla, lob bananas into a barrel.

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ASSOCIATE



# Leaving the Lockers Behind

BY STEPHANIE SMITH

## A LOOK BACK AT THE UPS AND DOWNS OF HIGH SCHOOL

**F**or the past 12 years, I've walked the halls of schools. I've sat in classrooms day after day, month after month, year after year. I've grown accustomed to the bells, the books and the rules. But, this fall, I'm taking a big step – leaving home and starting university, so I've been thinking a lot about school lately.

For me, school was a good experience. My favourite years so far are the ones I spent in high school. You're thinking, "She's dreaming!" But yes, it's true, I do like school.

First, it's about the people. The relationships you develop lay the groundwork for the rest of your life. Classmates become friends, teachers transform into "normal people," and, if you're lucky, you've figured out how to weed out those who matter from those who can negatively influence you.

Knowing how to relate to all kinds of people will help you throughout life. Also, high school taught me about prejudice and discrimination. I have friends in all sorts of cliques and I act the same with my Band Nerd friends as I do with the Drama Geeks or my Besties. High school teaches you to look beneath the surface.

Second, there are the classes. I don't know how many times it happened: the whole class started laughing as a group. Whether we were persuading our teacher to let us watch a movie or let us order pizza in class (twice!), my

separate classes became small communities. Sure, we did our work, but we did it with a laugh. We put joy into our school experience.

By the time you get to be where I am, you'll know what I mean. The best times in high school are times spent in class laughing as a group (teacher included), hanging at lunchtimes and, yes, even those dreaded pep rallies.

I'm going to miss high school. I'll miss pacing the hallways, shouting hellos to people, laughing with friends, debating with teachers and even settling in for another long math class, where the most exciting thing that happens is choosing who gets to take the attendance.

High school can be fulfilling. You learn, test boundaries and see how much information your brain can hold before your eyes start to bleed with the effort of studying. Once you figure out how to survive it, the fun just comes naturally. Follow the tips below to get a jump start on the school year.

## 10 TIPS FOR SURVIVING HIGH SCHOOL

**DO YOUR HOMEWORK** – Teachers are never happy when a student comes with unfinished homework. Save yourself the grief.

**RESPECT YOUR TEACHERS** – Despite what you think, your teachers are smarter than you. Besides, respect is a two-way street.

**PARTICIPATE** – Maybe you're too cool for those dress-up days or the pep rallies. But you'll have more fun if you participate in your school culture.

**SOCIALIZE** – Cultivate friends to turn to when times get hard. Go for diversity. Try for acquaintances in older or younger grades and different groups.

**FIND YOUR CALLING** – Try out some different options. Find what you like to do, what you're good at. Everyone has a special area that they excel in.

**READ** – Don't forget to actually read the act of *Hamlet* your teacher assigned. The things you never heard of may catch your interest.

**COME PREPARED** – Try to have everything you think you might need for the class beforehand. Nothing is more distracting than someone getting up every 10 minutes to get something from his or her locker.

**BE READY TO WORK** – School is for learning. It's OK to have fun, but don't make your teacher yell. They get paid to teach, and while you don't get paid to learn, listening now will help your future prospects. Just think of it as a preparation for the real world.

**DON'T LOSE YOUR BOOKS** – This is the librarian's worst nightmare, and the school charges you for books not returned. Also, try being in a class of 25 with 10 textbooks!

**BE YOURSELF** – High school is a time for experimentation. Dye your hair blue and try new looks. The most important part of high school is to not lose yourself in other people's view of what's perfect.





**MAYBE YOUR "RECREATIONAL" DRUG USE HAS BECOME MORE LIKE A FULL-TIME COMMITMENT. OR MAYBE YOUR ATTACHMENT TO PLAYERS LIGHT IS EATING UP YOUR ALLOWANCE. WHATEVER THE ADDICTION, SOME OF US HAVE A MONKEY ON OUR BACKS THAT WE WANT TO GET RID OF.**

**18**

**WHEN THE MONKEY IS THE BOTTLE**

TAKE A BOOZE QUIZ; 10 REASONS TO STAY SOBER AT A PARTY; STREETERS; WHEN A FAMILY MEMBER DRINKS; ROCKING OUT SOBER; WAYS TO BE A GREAT FRIEND

**20**

**WHY I STAY SOBER**

ALCOHOL IS LIQUID CONFIDENCE TO SOME. NO THANKS, I SAY

**22**

**WHY I DON'T SMOKE**

ONE OF THE MOST COMMON ADDICTIONS LIKELY WON'T PUT YOU ON THE STREET, BUT IT'S DEADLY

**30**

**CLEANUP TIME**

YOU O.D., WAKE UP IN THE HOSPITAL AND DECIDE TO KICK THAT MONKEY

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## TOP 10 REASONS TO STAY SOBER AT A PARTY

1. Barfing on someone's shoes is not the best way to say hello.
2. Walking across the room can take a lot longer when it's not in a straight line.
3. How will you discuss funny insiders from a party you can't remember?
4. No matter what anyone says, slurring is not hot.
5. *Jackass* was better left on TV.
6. With things like Facebook in the world, there is no way that your drunken confessions will stay secret.
7. Sure, permanent marker washes off... eventually.
8. Police are usually not on the side of the intoxicated.
9. No matter how much fun you had last night, your hangover today will make you wish it never happened.
10. That hot guy/girl you saw last night? They look a lot different without the beer goggles you were wearing..

by Kendra Doetzel





## WHEN A LOVED ONE DRINKS

Call the AADAC Help Line at 1-866-33AADAC.

# QUIZ TIME

ANSWERS: 1F, 2F, 3F, 4F, 5F  
Source: Alberta Health Services/AADAC



Why I

# Stay Sober

By Josée Gulayets



**A**

lcohol is liquid confidence in a pretty

glass bottle to many people I know. They drink for fun, for courage, out of anger or depression. They end up getting stupid and sick, and regretting many things they've done along the bumpy path of partying. No thanks. I choose to stay sober.

I don't go to parties very often because alcohol is usually there. I've been to a few parties here and there and always ended up playing babysitter: a great deterrent. The last time I went to a party I walked through the front door and heard wailing. I followed the horrific noise up the stairs only to find my friend sitting in the bathroom half naked next to a toilet, crying. It turns out he drank too much alcohol, too fast. He'd never drunk before, made up for it that night, and now was a complete and total frantically depressed mess. His moods changed within seconds, from being happy to see me and then back to crying again, thinking he was ruining the party for everyone. He was a disaster, a light switch of polar opposite emotions.

Another time, a friend of mine got completely plastered and ran around outside in the middle of winter without a shirt on. His favourite shirt ended up somewhere in a tree. But the one drinking incident that is forever etched in my memory occurred at a family reunion. I was 13 and my family was partying it up. It was way past dark and we kids decided to play a game. We placed a red glow stick in a bottle, threw it and raced frantically to find it in the tall prairie grass. In the middle of our game, a group of younger adults in our family interrupted us. One of them began flailing at our bottle, having a fake with it, throwing feeble punches and making weak kicks, while the rest of the group encouraged him. He looked pathetic. Right at that moment, I could not figure out for the life of me why someone would want to do this to themselves.

Many people, not just teenagers, drink out of curiosity, to feel good, to fit in, for confidence or to feel older. Peer pres-

sure is a large part of the decision, but I blame the advertising industry as well. Everywhere you look, you see pictures of beautiful girls drinking pretty coloured liquid in large crystal glasses to make us believe that if we, too, drink this amazing liquid, we will get our chance to be as beautiful, or for boys, to get close to someone as beautiful. I think the constant bombardment of ads for alcohol and cigarettes is part of a substantial push in the rising amount of teenagers turning to drinking and smoking too.

The music industry is pushing an almost identical message. Many artists condone smoking marijuana and using other illicit drugs. Artists under the legal age limit are singing songs about getting drunk in clubs. Take the song *Tipsy* by J-Kwon, which starts off with this as an intro: "Teen drinking is very bad / Yo, I got a fake ID though." Songs like this send a message to all of us that breaking the law is all good and fun. One of the most popular definitions of "party" on [www.UrbanDictionary.com](http://www.UrbanDictionary.com) is "when everyone gets together at someone's house, gets drunk, consumes illegal substances like weed and coke, and trashes the place completely."







## When you have confidence and strength of character, saying “no” to a glass of liquid courage at a party is a no-brainer

It may seem cool and hip, but it leads down roads no one wants to end up on: losing friends and family, ending up in jail and possibly even dying. Does that sound like somewhere any of you want to end up? I know it's not for me.

The detrimental effects of alcohol are widely known and accepted throughout the medical community. Many professionals are worried because there has been a steady increase in teenage alcohol abuse. Alcohol-dependent teens have substantially degraded short-term memory skills, and binge drinking has been shown to disrupt brain development. In the long term, alcohol abuse results in liver damage, pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), certain cancers and other health problems. Illegal drugs are inarguably harmful to your body. They can result in convulsions, insomnia, nausea and death. Still not convinced? The chances of being sexually assaulted drastically increase when alcohol and drugs are around.

These facts, wrapped up in one not-so-pretty package, are why I'm not willing to take the chance. And I'm not alone.

People who take part in the straight edge lifestyle do not smoke, drink, or consume any drugs or illegal substances at all. The straight edge subculture has very strong ties to music as well, particularly the hardcore genre. Many look to the band *Minor Threat* as pioneers of the movement. They helped give the subculture a louder voice than it had ever had before with lyrics such as “Don't smoke/Don't drink” from the song *Out of Step (With The World)* or “I don't even think about speed/That's something I don't need” from the song *Straight Edge*. These songs are both from the band's EP in 1981. Many other music bands such as AFI, *Just Say Go!*, the *Warriors* and *Throwdown* have become part of the movement as well. They are going against the norm of

alcoholism and drug addiction, both of which have consumed the lives of many famous talents. Elvis Presley died next to a toilet, bloated on pills; Jim Morrison died in the bathtub on heroin, Chris Farley died from an overdose of opiates and cocaine and Amy Winehouse has been in and out of rehab and court due to her well-documented substance abuse.

How are these people role models for the masses? It's not right.

I may not be able to create a list of rights or wrongs; it all depends on who you are and what you think. What I can do is offer my opinion and my advice. If you want to make something of yourself and become anything under the stars, keep your head on straight and don't turn to alcohol as an escape to your problems. In my opinion, alcohol ruins people. It turns them into unrecognizable moping slob, angry deviants or over-zealous hysterics. This may be my opinion, but I hope that some of you share the same view, and maybe, just maybe, together we can change the way society works, thinks and parties. ☐



# No Smoking? No Kidding



E

**Edmonton resident Roderick Howard\*** started smoking when he was only 13 years old. Up until then, he was a good boy who got good grades. Then suddenly he was sick of his polished image. One day he went to the local store by himself on a school day and bought a pack of cigarettes. "I don't know why," he says. "No one smoked, my parents didn't even smoke. But I wanted to do something bad, because I was really good at school and I was tired of being a goody-two-shoes. It was probably the most rebellious thing I ever did."

Most seriously addicted smokers start young. Of these, a large majority start between the ages of 15 and 19. Their reasons are not that different from Roderick's: trying to fit in is often a big motivator. The tobacco industry works really hard at targeting youth to take up smoking as a way to cope with stress, to stay skinny or combat boredom, says Alberta Health Services/Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission's Anna Murphy.

"Peer pressure is a big one," she says. "The tobacco industry engineered cigarettes to create physiological changes in the brain after only two or three cigarettes. They add chemicals, such as ammonia, to try and make the brain become addicted faster."

"When drugs dealers do it," she says, "it's called free-basing."

Not many people know that nicotine is as addictive as heroin or cocaine. Like with any other drug, over time you build a resistance to nicotine, so you eventually need more and more of it. Withdrawal can be very severe, consisting

**Need help?**  
If you've tried to quit but can't, visit [www.albertaquits.ca](http://www.albertaquits.ca) or [www.aadac.com/186\\_540.asp](http://www.aadac.com/186_540.asp) for tips and resources that can really help. Or call the Smokers Help Line at 1-866-33AADAC. Visit: [www.gripnlife.ca](http://www.gripnlife.ca)





# Cigarettes are the only legal products that, when used properly, will kill half of users. So why do teens take it up?

of cravings, headaches, mood swings, sweaty palms, irritability, sleeplessness, and physical pain. The first 72 hours are the worst. When the nicotine leaves your body, your brain begins to miss out on the "feel good" endorphins such as serotonin and dopamine, that cigarettes provide. Normally your brain creates its own endorphins but smoking starts shutting down your brain's natural chemicals. When you stop smoking, it takes awhile for your brain to start creating endorphins on its own again.

Sometimes quitting tobacco is known as quitter's flu: dry mouth, difficulty concentrating, coughing, stomach pain, gas and diarrhea. When young people smoke, high amounts of a carcinogen called carbon dioxide enters their bodies. Once they're addicted they'll start to feel short of breath, have a harder time doing sports and being active because small hairlike organs on the surface of some of the cells lining the upper respiratory tract, called cilia, end up trapped in gunk. When you stop, the little hairs start to free themselves, which is why people who try to quit cough more at first.

"It takes a long time to develop a smoker's cough, or wrinkles or stuff like that," says Murphy. "But smoking is attributable to 80 per cent of lung cancers, and 50 per cent of people who smoke will eventually die from it. It's the only legal product that – when used as intended – kills half of its customers. It's the number one cause of preventable deaths."

In Canada, the federal and provincial governments have tried to stop minors from smoking through legislation such as the Tobacco Reduction Act of 2003, which says

that no one under 18 can buy a pack of smokes at the corner store. Store owners who sell tobacco products to anyone under 18 can be found guilty of an offense and have to pay a fine. Since January 1, 2008, there's been a complete ban on smoking in all public places and workplaces in Alberta. Smokers now have to stand at least five metres away from all entrances, windows and air intakes to public places and workplaces. Since July 1, 2008, retailers are no longer allowed to display or advertise cigarettes or other tobacco products.

The Canadian government also banned the branding of so-called light cigarettes because it found that the label was misleading people, who bought them because they thought they had fewer negative health effects. But the only difference is that in a light cigarette, manufacturers poke holes in the filter and less tar shows up in tests because some of it escapes out of the holes. But people who smoke light cigarettes tend to move their fingers to cover the holes, breathe deeper and hold their breath longer. Some of them actually cause more damage to their lungs.

According to the latest Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS), 21 per cent of Albertans aged 15 years and older smoke. Youth smoking rates have dipped to 15 per cent, which is down from 28 per cent in 1999. But it's not because teens are concerned with their health, says Murphy. It's because of a number of factors, including concern for the environment. "They get angry at the tobacco industry for the environmental effect," she says. "Cigarettes often are grown in developing countries. It's very bad

for the soil, which isn't being used to grow food. They don't like seeing the butts in parks or on public beaches. And the butts are very bad for the animals that ingest them."

Now 22 years old, Roderick Howard smokes about two packs of cigarettes a week. It has become part of his routine. He has no plans to quit right away. He probably shouldn't have started when he was young, he says. When he started smoking, his friends thought it was cool. His teachers were shocked and judgmental, he says, but their reactions ("Oh my God, how can you be doing that? You're such a good boy!") only encouraged him.

"No one could have said anything to make me stop, except maybe my friends. If they had said it wasn't cool, if they were like, 'you look stupid,' I would have stopped. But no one did. They started smoking with me, instead. If any of them die of cancer, I am going to feel so guilty."

- With files from Allison McPhail

\* Not his real name

## A smoke and a brew

While alcohol is the most commonly used drug in Alberta, tobacco causes more addictions. Between 33 and 50 per cent of people who experiment with tobacco become regular users. Seventy to 90 per cent of regular tobacco users become addicted. In comparison, 77 per cent of Albertans use alcohol, but the addiction rate is estimated to be about 2.7 per cent.

Source: Alberta Health Services/AADAC





# SOUND and SENS

**In the blinding lights of the stage,** at Night Deposit, a Whitecourt, Alberta bar, the guitars glisten. The cheering screams of crazed fans fill the bar with energy, their racing hearts full of adrenalin, pounding to the beats of the drums; their minds swallowed by the music. Beads of sweat trickle down Logan McPhee's reddened face, while Nathan Vallee strums in perfect harmony beside him. Matt Levesque takes one last breath and captures the audience with his lyrics. An explosion of applause and appreciation fills the room. Years of practice have gotten the Blessed Pariah this far; there's no turning back now. Beneath bright stage lights, their talent grows – raw, edgy and filled with life.



## Whitecourt's own metal band, Blessed Pariah, busts the stereotypes. They're black on drugs, and all about the music

By Shelley Astill

### "We created a band because the world

needed new music," Adam Levesque says with a grin. It's a few days after their Night Deposit gig and the boys are at a regular practice at bassist Cory Walt's place, in the middle of the countryside. They're playing outside in the yard and Cory's mom is mowing the lawn nearby. They lay into another number, and you can't hear the mower at all.

Between numbers they talk about the band and the business. As the Blessed Pariah, they've been making heavy metal music together for almost two years. Adam, 18, plays the drums; Cory, 18, plays the bass guitar; Nathan, 18, plays electric guitar along with Logan, 17. Singer Matt, 23, is Adam's older brother. All of the band members play multiple instruments.

There are many stereotypes out there about the type of music played by bands such as the Blessed Pariah. The metal rocker lifestyle has always been followed by a dirty image, smeared with drug and alcohol abuse and self-destruction. In the band's opinion, people like that are ruining the scene for the rest.

"As a metal core band, people judge us and assume that we drink and do a lot of drugs,"

Logan says, as his bandmates nod. "The truth is, drug abuse has increased dramatically everywhere in the lives of so many different groups of people, not just musicians. We stay away from drugs. It's not worth it."

Mondays and Thursdays are sacred days for the boys because these are the band's days to gather together to share their passion for music, jam, and practice old songs. A typical practice involves sharing new ideas and experiences, lots of laughter and, of course, pizza.

Making a name for themselves while growing up in Whitecourt is a challenge. "A small town never has as many opportunities to showcase talents like large cities do," says Adam. There are other challenges, such as finishing high school and getting to work on time. The boys are forced to balance regular life as teenagers and young adults and their musical careers.

"My favourite show was when we played at National Skateboard Day," says Nathan, he's a skateboarding fan himself.

Sometimes, some of their gigs are non-alcoholic. After some success playing at local talent shows and at the high school, and with a rapidly growing fan base, the boys accepted an offer to play alongside Twitch Oxide and Tuxedo Black at the Night Deposit.

The Night Deposit agreed to have an alcohol-free concert so that the audience could be peopled by minors and friends. Opening night rolled around and the lucky people with tickets swarmed the entrance ready to be immersed in rock for a night. Since the show was non-alcoholic, the audience really was captivated by the performance and everyone was able to enjoy themselves without getting hurt, stepping in puke or tripping over drunken bodies.

The boys all agree: alcohol creates drama. "We would rather have our audience be sober during our shows so they actually listen to our music," says Matt. "Use alcohol in moderation [if you are of age] and don't be stupid; rise above the rumours." □





# Ten Rungs Down

By Caitlin Hart

**Addictions can rob you of everything you value: your family, friends, and your home.** Lots of different kinds of people can become addicted to something. You don't have to be out-of-work, poor or homeless to have a problem. Here's a list of 10 common addictions:



**1. Alcohol:** Having a drink with friends is OK when you are 18 or older. When the drinking crosses the line to make trouble for the person, it's alcohol abuse. Abuse can worsen to alcoholism, where the person depends on drinking, drinks too much, or too often, feels unable to stop, always thinking about the next drink.

**2. Illegal Drugs:** An overdose of drugs can kill you. Chronic use can also kill you, give you brain damage, or land you on the street. Certain combinations of drugs can also kill you. Drug abuse affects the user, and his or her family and friends. People are hooked when they continue to use a drug and experience physical pain and anxiety when they try to stop.

**3. Prescription or over-the-counter drugs:** Drug abuse and addiction can also happen when you use these so-called legal drugs in a way that the doctor or pharmacist did not recommend them to be used. A person who suffers from any kind of drug addiction has a craving for and becomes physically dependent on them.

**4. Tobacco:** Cigarettes, pipes and cigars are easily available and difficult to kick. Tobacco has a variety of chemicals in it. One is nicotine, which affects the brain, changing mood, alertness and concentration. Teens tend to become more addicted than those who start smoking later.


**5. Caffeine:** Arguably less harmful than other addictions. Could you imagine a morning without Starbucks or a Coke? Neither can 76 per cent of teens. It may give you a boost for first period, but you may gradually need more, have physical cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Large amounts of caffeine can lead to stomach upset, nervousness, and mild withdrawal, such as headaches, if you suddenly stop.

**6. Gambling:** For adults, some kinds of gambling are legal, but it can be addictive and harmful. Gambling directly impacts a person's wallet, but can also affect relationships, jobs and lead to illegal activities. For addicted gamblers, it can grow from small bets, to stealing, lying and cheating to pay back debts and finance gambling.

**7. Internet:** Facebook, Nexopia, MySpace: you've got accounts. Does this mean you've got an Internet addiction? Probably not. But this addiction is one just being added to the next issue of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* – the book psychiatrists rely on. When the computer interrupts school, family and friends, and it's getting in the way of your life, you may want to talk to a doctor.

**8. Video games:** Gaming falls under the same entry in the upcoming manual as Internet addiction. Playing *Halo* an hour or so every night may be harmless fun, but if it's starting to take over and you ditch your friends for your Xbox, you may have crossed the line.

**9. Food:** Generally, food addiction is a term used when a person is not able to stop harmful overeating due to physiological and psychological dependency, despite its negative consequences. But overeating may also be a compulsive behaviour tied up with an anxiety disorder. Compulsive eating may lead to becoming overweight or, on the flip side, anorexia or bulimia, which are not addictions, but mental health problems.

**10. Shopping:** Shopping may be an addiction if it causes psychological dependency and an inability to stop. "Shopaholics" buy things they have no use for to temporarily boost their self-esteem or deal with stress. But bouts of reckless spending may be symptoms of other mental health problems, such as bipolar disorder. 



# Help Wanted

Got a **niggling question** that no one can answer, or that you're too **afraid** to ask your units, teacher or **best friend**? Send it to us. We **guarantee** anonymity, and we're beyond embarrassment. We'll find an **expert** to answer the most **persistent** question you have related to any topic: relationships, **school**, sexuality, puberty, drugs, **love**, life, and the pursuit of **happiness**. So... **what** are you **waiting** for?

**Question:** A while ago some kids were talking on the bus about whether someone was circumcised or not. (I'm not.) They were talking like being uncircumcised was weird and gross. Does it matter?

— **Denny Doesn't Know**

Dear Denny,

It doesn't really matter. Sure, there are some benefits of being circumcised; it reduces the risk of infections and STIs (sexually transmitted infections). But that doesn't mean it's better or more normal.

"The practice of routinely circumcising children seems to come in and out of vogue," says Dr. Derek Bochinski, an Edmonton urologist. "Often the decision to circumcise or not will depend on whether the father has been circumcised. It certainly is not considered weird to be uncircumcised."

Chances are you really aren't as much a minority as you think. It used to be that circumcision was the status quo. Now that's changed.

Besides, Dr. Bochinski says men report a decrease in sensitivity after circumcision. Good hygiene lessens the risk of infection in uncircumcised guys.

**Question:** My parents are religious. I used to like going to church with them,

but these days I don't know if I believe in the same things. How do I tell them I don't wanna go to church?

— **Hester Hesitates**

Hey Hester,

It's important to remember that any time parents are concerned about you, it's because they care. The first thing you need to do is help them see that, even though you might disagree on something, you care about them too.

Amanda Holowochuk, provisional psychologist at Calgary Counselling Services, says that young people need to be open with parents about their changing faith. Don't spring the decision on them. That makes genuine spiritual concerns look like teenage rebellion.

"If teens engage their parents in the conversation, they're more likely to listen and respect what the teenager is saying," Holowochuk says. Even still, accepting your changing beliefs will take time. So measure the pros and cons of your decision, Holowochuk says.

That's something you can cover when you talk to your parents. And be sure to find out what church really means to your parents. "Is it the actual going to church or is it the family time? Get clarity as to why they want you to attend," says Holowochuk. You can use that info to reach a satisfying compromise. Maybe you meet your parents afterwards or go with them twice a month. And reassure them that

your values haven't changed, just your beliefs. Like a lot of problems, this one gets better by keeping the people that care about you in the loop.

**Question:** I have visible hair on my breasts, and I'm a girl! I'm worried I'm a freak, or worse, a guy.

— **Hairy Mary**

Hi Mary,

There are more girls with some hair around their nipples than you think. It's just not something they talk about. It isn't freaky at all; it's totally common. It can be hard when you think you are developing in different ways than your peers, but don't worry.

You can always just leave the stray hair alone: it's probably nowhere near as bad as you think.

There are a lot of ways to get rid of the unwanted hair. Probably the best way is to pluck out the rebel hairs with tweezers. However you approach it, be careful. It's a sensitive area!

If it's a real problem, you can have laser removal, but that'll cost you around \$75 a session. Sometimes excessive hair growth can signal a hormonal imbalance. If you think you're growing too much hair, you can ask your gynecologist to check your hormone levels. If it is a hormone problem, your periods may be affected too.

**Help Wanted** is provided for general informational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultations with your doctor or to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any personal medical and health questions that you may have.

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# Detox Dialogue

Grip assigned two teens to argue on opposite sides of a pointed problem, just for the fun of an argument. They didn't get to choose their side; we flipped a coin

By Samantha Marcellin and Madelaine Longman

## SHOULD THERE BE AN OPEN AND SAFE INJECTION SITE FOR DRUG ADDICTS IN ALBERTA?

**"Safe injection sites should not be a government service," writes Madelaine Longman. "Offer treatment sooner instead."**

It is a fact that continuing to take addictive drugs will have negative effects on an individual, whereas treatment, or better yet, prevention, will have positive effects. The sooner treatment takes place, the lower the chances of developing health issues as a result of drug abuse, and the higher the chances of recovery.

These safe injection sites can bring the focus away from recovery, allowing people to sustain their habits. At the Vancouver safe injection site, which opened in 2003, there are more than 600 visits per day on average and, in a two year period beginning in March 2004, there were 453 drug overdoses recorded there. Although


none of these resulted in deaths, reports on the site do not mention how this has affected the addicts' health, such as personality changes, a weakened immune system and damage to the body, including the central nervous system.

Safe injection sites attempt to promote taking precautions when using drugs, but the most severely addicted are not thinking logically, so the message will likely be lost. And the longer people continue to use drugs, the more severely addicted they become, so perhaps visits to a safe injection site can have a negative effect on their health over the long term.

Even if drug users have not died at safe injection sites, this does not mean that their drug use is not putting them at risk for death, illness or violence from a deal gone wrong. These drugs are obtained illegally and everyone involved in the drug trade lives extremely dangerously, bringing crime and violence into our communities. The focus should be on drug reduction, rather than on encouraging "safe" drug use.



# eSaid (x2)



**"Safe injection sites are completely necessary," writes Samantha Marcellin. "Programs like this lessen the harm done now and into the future."**

Safe injection sites are necessary to start changing the way the world views addiction. When safe needle exchanges are introduced, the rate of needle sharing is reduced. This is a huge gain that affects everyone. When needle sharing goes unchecked, so does the spread of pathogens like HIV and hepatitis C.

As a result, large amounts of taxes are spent treating diseases that are totally preventable. All of the money that can be saved as a direct result of these sites can be put towards education and addiction treatment. Not only does a program like this lessen the harm done now, but it can seriously curtail the rate at which people become addicted in the future. Fewer people with addictions is what the War on Drugs is all about. Imposing stronger jail sentences on users will not help the community as much as an educational, friendly approach. These services have proven to be more cost-effective as well.

Safe injection sites provide health care, clean needles, condoms and promote safe sex. It's an environment that is helpful, non-judgmental

and can save lives. Without safe places like this for desperate people to go, the problem of addiction remains unsolved. As the Canadian politician Libby Davies put it, a dead body can't go into treatment. These sites are a first step. Some people believe this kind of program will promote drug use, but the fact is that addictions are a disease and we are supposed to treat diseases very seriously and work together to beat them. If someone had cancer from smoking, no one would dream of saying that he or she was an immoral person who didn't deserve help. If someone is willing to go to a safe injection site, then there is hope for them. The more addicts there are who are willing to take a step towards safety, the more people there will be getting help, who can someday help others in the same situation. Walking away from an intravenous drug addiction is a feat alone. Now consider how much more difficult it would be to recover while struggling with HIV.

Overall, a city with safe injection sites is a healthier place. No one wants to be walking with their kids or siblings and find a discarded needle on the ground or to come into contact with a used needle or syringe in a park and contract a disease. A community that provides a safe and controlled means for people to use and dispose of their drug paraphernalia benefits everyone. The more safe injection sites are introduced, the more their success will be proven and the further these services will reach. One addict at a time, supervised injection sites will improve the safety and health of our communities. ☐

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# Addictions Cleanup TIME

By Rebecca Schaeffer

It may not be the first time you've tried to get clean, or the last. But it's good to know you have some options

**Y**ou wake up feeling shaky, and your head's throbbing. You're lying in an uncomfortable bed, not certain how you got there. You open your eyes a little to see what's going on. You see your mother beside you. Her head is in her hands and she's weeping. You realize you're in the hospital. Then it comes to you: you overdosed. There's a sick feeling in your stomach as you realize how close you came to dying. You feel even worse when your mother sobs again. You bought the drugs with money you stole from her wallet.

They discharge you, recommending that you visit Alberta Health Services/Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC), an organization dedicated to assisting people affected by addiction. One session, they say, just to get your options straight. Walk-ins are welcome and participation in any program is voluntary.

So, a few days later, you enter a main AADAC branch in Lethbridge. (There are also offices in Edmonton and Calgary, as well as smaller branches across Alberta.) You're about to meet the counsellor and are worried that she'll look at you accusingly or try and pressure you into treatment. You don't know if you can stand more of that.

When the counsellor comes in, you give her a bit of attitude. I don't need help, you tell her.

She smiles and says it's up to you. She explains that she usually recommends counselling if your addiction negatively influences one or more of seven major things in your life. She lists them – family, school/work, peers, relationships (boyfriend/girlfriend), health (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual), legal issues, and money problems – and you start to feel ill as you realize that most of them apply to you. You stick around to hear about the different programs.

You relax a little as she explains the different options because there is no pressure and no blame in the counsellor's eyes. She tells you about the detox program, where you get a six- to 10-day stay in a facility with other people who are in the same boat. It gives you time to flush out your system and let your head clear so that you can make an informed decision about what happens next. You think that this sounds like a good idea, but you want to hear all of the options first.

Next, the counsellor tells you about a longer term program, called the "Action Program." It lasts three months, and offers the opportunity to talk with other teens, similar to you. She tells you that it's like going

to school. Each day is as long as an average school day, and you're free to go home when the day is done. Education is provided to help the students keep up with their studies while recovering.

You ask about the other long-term program she mentioned, and the counsellor tells you about a residential program. You'd live in a comfortable residence with other people in the program. There, you'd still have schooling, as well as other interesting things, such as camping, biking, or other group activities. The Calgary-based residence is outside the city, in a wilderness setting, while the Edmonton residence is smack in the city and the Lethbridge program is city-based with a number of outdoor activities. They cater to what would help you most in your recovery.

What about the family, you ask her. You're worried that your relationship with your parents will never be the same. You want to fix it. The counsellor tells you that all the programs have heavy family involvement to repair the damage done. There are a number of family counselling sessions to help work through it all.

And then there are your friends. You're not sure what to do because all of your friends are really into drugs. You don't feel that you could resist. She tells you about counselling sessions on how to make new friends and how to have



# TOP 6 Ways to Help

IF YOU HAVE A FRIEND WITH SOME PROBLEMS, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO HELP MORE THAN YOU KNOW. HERE'S HOW

Everyone has a bad day sometimes. Some people will go through bad weeks or even months. The important part is getting over the rough patches. It could be that you got a lousy report card or it could be that your parents are getting a divorce. Regardless of the issue, most teens will turn to friends for support. Actually, I bet that you've helped a friend through some sticky times, or maybe you were the one looking for support. Either way, it pays to know how to deal with it.

By Sarah Culkin

1

## Don't press him

Although most teens turn to their friends, that doesn't mean everyone will. Some people prefer to deal with their own problems. If you know that he's having a hard time, but he doesn't want to talk, don't try to force it out of him. Just tell him that you'll be there for him if he wants to talk. Sometimes all people need is some time before they open up.

2

## Listen

Your friend trusts you enough to come to you when she's feeling stuck. You should be listening. Give her your full attention because hearing and listening aren't identical. Also, avoid interrupting or asking too many questions.

3

## Don't overreact

If he's finding something hard to deal with, it won't help to have you freaking out. Keep a cool head while he talks, even if you think it's something terrible. That doesn't mean you shouldn't be taking him seriously; it just means stay calm. Remember, being sympathetic and being melodramatic are not the same thing.

4

## Take it seriously

You might think that her problem is trivial, but it's obviously a big deal to her. Don't blow it off with a shallow response like "It'll be fine" or "That's nothing." Those kinds of comments will almost ensure that she'll never open up to you again.

5

## Be there for him

No matter what, support him. Showing that you care about someone can make all the difference in the world.

6

## Suggest help

If your friend's troubles are huge or you're afraid she might hurt herself, offer to go with her to talk to someone else, such as a school counselor.

the confidence to tell your old friends that you don't want to do drugs anymore, whether it be smoking, alcohol, or marijuana.

Lastly, you ask her what happens once these programs are over. Wouldn't you just slip back into old habits? She tells you that there's an aftercare program to help people, longer term. It's a friendly support group that meets weekly as a kind of safety net. She also says that you can access AADAC programs as many times as you need to get clean and stay that way. Relapses, she says, are not uncommon.

The session's over. You rise, feeling a little overwhelmed but you promise to consider the possibilities. She tells you that awareness is one of the main goals. As you walk out the door, her final promise echoes in your head: they'll be there, she says, if you want to further your recovery. ☐

**Not all addicted teens end up at the hospital, but many still realize that they need help. AADAC has been helping for more than 50 years. If you or a friend has a problem with addiction, don't hesitate to drop in for some information. Call the 24-hour AADAC Help Line at 1-866-332-2322 or visit the youth website at [www.aadac.com/21.asp](http://www.aadac.com/21.asp)**



# A Lot



PHOTO: FRANK G. S. A. M.

PHOTO: SEBASTIAN HANLON

PHOTO: DOUG CALLOW



When it comes to being a music fan in Alberta, the best way to capitalize on the scene is to volunteer at a music festival

By Rosy Lee



PHOTO: FRANK G. S. A. M.



PHOTO: DAWN KEN





**T**here are certain things you can expect at most Alberta music festivals: modern day hippies riding bicycles, cute boys with good style, eco-friendly reusable plate stations, plenty of tune-savvy patrons and an abundance of porta-potties, complete with hand sanitizer. And for music fans, volunteering at festivals is the best way to expand your musical horizons. I did it this summer at the Calgary Folk Music Festival (CFMF) and it was a great experience. You can start planning now to incorporate a volunteer gig into next summer.

### Day One: Two minutes after I sashay

through the gates, I'm already impressed by the sheer scale of things – from the merchandise tents and food vendors to the beer garden and volunteer-run CD Tent. I'm a volunteer here (my first shift is tomorrow) and I'm beginning to see why they need 1,500 of us. The festival only has a handful of hired staff. We are, after all, the backbone of the CFMF.

In fact, there are several music festivals in Alberta that rely on the help of volunteers, such as the 2,000 volunteer-run Edmonton Folk Music Festival. The CFMF is no exception. Volunteers run information tents, merchandise tents, first aid services, family areas, security, stage handling, set-up, environmental handling; almost every facet of the festival is covered by hard-working volunteers.

I have learned a few things in the first half hour of my festival experience. A) Folkies are, in fact, pretty die-hard despite the easygoing, sarong-and-sandles facade. Some of these people show up at 3 a.m. for tarp space in front

of the main stage. B) People who attend folk festivals endure lineups like no other. There's a lineup already across the bridge of Prince's Island Park when I get there, barely 15 minutes after the gates open. C) You can leave your stuff unattended and chances are no one will even look at it funny. D) There are crowds, and E) There are zero crying children.

Things are going pretty well, I say.

Also, there are perks to being a volunteer: there's the free food (it's even good), the free T-shirt, and the free after-parties. There's even the possibility of meeting artists, but the most exciting thing is a free pass to the festival, the music and the experience. The main stage acts of the night include big-name acts such as the Weakerthans and singer Aimee Mann, acoustic Toronto band the Great Lake Swimmers and Montreal artist Sam Roberts, who, by the way, could probably pass for an Albertan: half farm boy on top of his rock musician rep. (Sam, good call on the red shirt and jean jacket – you make it look easy, especially when you dress like you're one of us.)

### Day Two: Now, my volunteer duties start.

As luck would have it, I'm plucked from my food-serving crew and put at the front to control the hungry hordes and punch holes in their name cards as they enter. In the first half hour, this means bruising my palms and making lame jokes to fellow volunteers ("Can I punch you?" "Only if it doesn't bruise...ha, ha"). I come to realize that I'm probably the only person in the festival who gets to read everyone's festival badge to find out their name and what group

they're from – which, eureka, includes artists who've joined the food tent for a free meal. Out of that day's six main stage performers, members from four of the groups come through the line: the Carolina Chocolate Drops, the Be Good Tanyas, Caalexico, and rock/folk/indie star Andrew Bird. Also present in the food tent is Fort Macleod folk singer John Wort Hannam, who provides the entertainment for the meal. Joining him in the Albertan lineup this year are local indie bands the Consonant C and the increasingly popular Woodpigeon – both of whom boast a great talent for pretty harmonies and interesting personalities. Huzzah Alberta.

The night's main stage has everyone either enthralled with Andrew Bird's musicality or dancing and singing to Bedouin Soundclash, whose slower rendition of their hit, *When the Night Feels My Song*, is true to its title. The rest of their performance is equally inspiring.

### Day Three: It's the first day of music work-

shops on smaller stages. I think I have a good idea of what to expect from the smaller venues and I'm right on most counts; they are more intimate and much more personal than the main stage. But what I didn't expect is there is also something truer to the music, and the musicians don't seem to have to work at making it universally accessible. Artists are enjoying the flexibility to have a little fun with it. Andrew Bird spins melodies around his violin instead of his voice, while reggae bands Bedouin Soundclash and Kobo Town jam it out with Socalled. It's just amazing to see these artists learning from each other, playing music so raw and appealing.



That night, as a volunteer, I sign up to be part of a procession to carry a lantern around the audience after dark. The main stage begins with a strong performance by international folk rock singer Josh Ritter and, as we carry the lanterns atop bamboo poles around the field, the stage is handed to Blue Rodeo, a veteran band which brings the crowd to a standing encore with the song *Lost Together*.

**Day Four: Some threatening rain clouds** finally open up and start to pour, but nobody seems to mind. I've been talking to the same volunteers for three days now and they continue to surprise me by making interesting, funny conversation. It makes me realize that folkies know how to do it right. Not only are they good-natured people but they have some strange ability to move through lines fast and to walk through crowds at a regular pace. They know how to hunker down in flash storms. They pick up their garbage and they know how to have a good time.

With the rainstorm and my final meal service complete, my friends and I head towards our tarp for the last night of performances. Today, the last act is five-foot-two folk rocker Ani DiFranco from Buffalo, New York. Her shifting guitar tunings and personal-to-political lyrics are what the crowd has waited out the storm for. She doesn't disappoint.

If you ask me, volunteering at a music festival is a bit like getting ice cream for free. I've spent the past four days meeting people, listening to music and soaking up the atmosphere for free – and even better – from behind the scenes. Another plus is that we are appreciated for our efforts. Not only do they feed us, give us free passes and listen to what we have to say. I've learned that, no matter where you are in Alberta, from the North Country Fair on the shores of Lesser Slave Lake to the Edmonton Folk Festival (deemed by *Rolling Stone* to be maybe the hippest music festival in North America), a festival is filled with like-minded music lovers and people who can dance to a beat. And, to a true music fan, nothing is better than that. ☐

**If you're interested in trying the experience by attending or volunteering at a music festival, check out these ones in and around your area:**

- **Calgary Folk Music Festival**  
**Genre:** folk  
**Where:** Prince's Island Park, Calgary  
[www.calgaryfolkfest.com](http://www.calgaryfolkfest.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
E-mail [taliala@calgaryfolkfest.com](mailto:taliala@calgaryfolkfest.com)
- **Edmonton Folk Music Festival**  
**Genre:** folk  
**Where:** Gallagher Park, Edmonton  
[www.edmontonfolkfest.org](http://www.edmontonfolkfest.org)  
**Interested in volunteering?** Visit the website to download the application or call 780-429-1899
- **Central Music Festival**  
**Genre:** folk and roots  
**Where:** outside of Red Deer  
[www.centralmusicfest.com](http://www.centralmusicfest.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?** Download the youth application from the website
- **Beaumont Blues Festival**  
**Genre:** blues and roots  
**Where:** Beaumont (south of Edmonton city limits on 50th street)  
[www.beaumontblues.net](http://www.beaumontblues.net)  
**Interested in volunteering?** Call Lynn at 780-929-8883 or e-mail [beaumontblues@gmail.com](mailto:beaumontblues@gmail.com)
- **Big Valley Jamboree**  
**Genre:** country  
**Where:** Camrose  
[www.bigvalleyjamboree.com](http://www.bigvalleyjamboree.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
Call 1-888-404-1234 or e-mail [trevorv@pplevents.ca](mailto:trevorv@pplevents.ca)
- **Canmore Folk Music Festival**  
**Genre:** folk  
**Where:** Canmore  
[www.canmorefolkfestival.com](http://www.canmorefolkfestival.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?** Visit the website in spring '09 or e-mail [info@canmorefolkfestival.com](mailto:info@canmorefolkfestival.com)
- **Jasper Folk Festival**  
**Genre:** folk  
**Where:** Jasper  
[www.jasperfolkfestival.com](http://www.jasperfolkfestival.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?** Download the application from the website or call 780-852-3615
- **Blueberry Bluegrass and Country Music Festival**  
**Genre:** bluegrass and country  
**Where:** Stony Plain  
[www.blueberrybluegrass.com](http://www.blueberrybluegrass.com)

**Interested in volunteering?**

Call 780-886-1267 or e-mail [info@blueberrybluegrass.com](mailto:info@blueberrybluegrass.com)

- **North Country Fair**  
**Genre:** Folk and Roots  
**Where:** Lesser Slave Lake  
[www.lsncca.ca](http://www.lsncca.ca)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
E-mail [ncfvvolunteers@lsncca.ca](mailto:ncfvvolunteers@lsncca.ca) or visit the website to apply
- **South Country Fair**  
**Genre:** folk and roots  
**Where:** Fort Macleod  
[www.scfair.ab.ca](http://www.scfair.ab.ca)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
E-mail [danu11@ab@hotmail.com](mailto:danu11@ab@hotmail.com)
- **Calgary International Blues Festival**  
**Genre:** jazz and blues  
**Where:** Calgary  
[www.calgarybluesfest.com](http://www.calgarybluesfest.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
E-mail [volunteer@calgarybluesfest.com](mailto:volunteer@calgarybluesfest.com)
- **Edmonton International Jazz Festival**  
**Genre:** jazz  
**Where:** Edmonton  
[www.edmontonjazz.com](http://www.edmontonjazz.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
E-mail [volunteer@edmontonjazz.com](mailto:volunteer@edmontonjazz.com)  
Note: In 2008, the jazz festival didn't accept teens under age 18
- **Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival**  
**Genre:** blues  
**Where:** Edmonton  
[www.bluesinternationaltd.com](http://www.bluesinternationaltd.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
E-mail [TeamBlues@BluesInternationalLtd.com](mailto:TeamBlues@BluesInternationalLtd.com) or call 780-708-7230
- **Heart of the City Festival**  
**Genre:** original  
**Where:** Giovanni Caboto Park, Edmonton  
[www.hotcmf.com](http://www.hotcmf.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?**  
E-mail [d\\_arseneault@hotmail.com](mailto:d_arseneault@hotmail.com)

**Interested in classical music? Why not try:**

- **Edmonton Symphony Orchestra**  
[www.edmontonsymphony.com](http://www.edmontonsymphony.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?** Download an application from the site or e-mail [jenna.schwanak@wingspearcentre.com](mailto:jenna.schwanak@wingspearcentre.com)
- **Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra**  
[www.cpo-live.com](http://www.cpo-live.com)  
**Interested in volunteering?** Download an application from the site, e-mail [kfedorak@cpo-live.com](mailto:kfedorak@cpo-live.com) or phone 403-571-0265



It Happened to Me

# A Crash Course in Life

It took a car collision and months of dealing with injuries others couldn't readily see to help me realize what's important

By Jena Tang

**S**ometimes, I hear people saying that they wish certain predicaments – illnesses or injuries – could happen to them, that maybe being on that kind of pedestal for a while would get people to care. And sometimes I hear that a broken leg or the loss of a beloved pet is no big deal. You get over it.



# It Happened to Me

**Months ago, my own name would have** been listed somewhere in that cynical category. Well, lucky for me, I got exactly what I wanted. It's almost as if having the mere idea was some kind of binding contract, but that I didn't read the fine print—and overlooked one of the conditions—before I had already agreed.

I'd had a bad morning. Woke up at 6:50 to quickly review for a biology test, flew through my already sloppily made breakfast, and got into an argument with my friend Isabelle in English class. I look back on that day and realize that I'd much rather have a million more such bad mornings than one single more identical afternoon.

My pencil lay stiff in my hand. The chatter in the classroom was indistinct. What I'd do for another two hours of sleep, I thought. I forced my fingers to form the numbers of the date on my sheet of paper: February 28, 2008. Looking back on that day, I wonder how many times I wrote down the same date. I didn't know I was etching a date in my own mind permanently. If I had known, I would have put more effort into that day.

The rest of the school day dragged on. I was so relieved to hear the bell sound at the end of the day. I rummaged in my locker for everything I needed for an exam we were having the next day about photosynthesis. There was something about the Krebs cycle too. I hauled my overloaded bag onto my arm and climbed onto the bus. "I'm getting off next. I've got work today," said Isabelle. "I'll see you later." She climbed out of her seat, and we exchanged smiles before she got off. I suppose it was because of our earlier argument that she didn't give me a hug goodbye.

Finally, I thought when the bus reached my stop. Along with half the kids on the bus, I shoved my way towards the back door and stepped off. The sun's blazing light teased my winter coat. I looked across the street, and my heart leaped. My connecting bus was there. *I can't afford to be late again*, I thought.

It was stupid. My mind keeps revisiting that moment, screaming at me, as if I must have been an idiot to have given in to that

impulse. I stepped off the curb and onto the street between the two parked buses, in back of a herd of students. They dashed across the road to catch the bus on the other side. I followed. I could hear a distant car. It'll stop, I assured myself, and I took another step out. My head whipped around, and suddenly my vision was obscured by a white bumper. It was growing larger.

**Everything was blurry. I could make out** the figure of a grown man. "Who are you?" I asked.

"EMS," he said. His blurry figure was standing above me. Was I lying down?

"EMS...?" I raised my hands to my face. There was a tube coming out of my hand. A flashing red light was attached to the other hand. There was blood. "What happened?" I was almost too scared to ask.

"I think you've just been hit by a car," the man said. "How old are you?" He fiddled around with the tubes and gave instructions to the driver. I lay there in disbelief. Hit by a car? I was going home. How?

"What happened?" I asked again. The man looked at me intently. "Was it my fault? What happened?" The moment felt so brief. I felt pain in my head and a stab in my arms and right side. I wanted answers. What was going to happen to me now? A wave of fear overwhelmed me.

"You'll be OK," the man reassured me. I let my head roll to the side and closed my eyes. I would be OK. Still, I felt so unsettled. My dad would be furious with me. I could hear the lectures. Jaywalking. What was I thinking?

"What happened?" I asked again. I could see the EMS guy's eyebrows contract; he looked concerned. "Do you know what month it is, Jena?" That answer had nothing to do with what I had just asked. Why didn't he just tell me what happened? I tried to raise my head and realized I had a neck brace on.

"What happen—" I stopped. I couldn't answer his question. I was devastated. I racked my brain. What day was it? What month? Hot tears trickled down my face. I



**"Everything was blurry. I could make out the figure of a grown man. Who are you?"**

couldn't remember. A million months and days tossed around in my mind. It was July, wasn't it? Yes. "July?"

The man looked at me but said nothing. It wasn't July. I couldn't remember. I could feel more tears. How could I not remember?

My heart felt torn in two. As I lay in the emergency room, I couldn't stop thinking I went through all of the months. There were only 12, right? I stayed still as the nurse took various X-rays. I could hear the policeman trying to question me but I ignored him. At that moment, I had forgotten my faith; I was almost angry with God - but it was my fault. I wasn't in the crosswalk. I heard that much from the officer.

My nurse, Sharon, made great company. She kept reassuring me, telling me jokes - then she told me my family was coming. I had almost forgotten. It felt like forever until I saw my father, brother and sister stagger into the room. I refused to acknowledge their tears - I felt too guilty. The doctor prescribed medication and told my dad I had a concussion. That I had asked the EMS man repetitive questions, that I had trouble remembering. They took me home with a lot of places covered in gauze. I couldn't sleep that night. My father and mother kept coming in to check on me. The more times the bedroom door opened, the more my heart ached. What had I done?

When I awoke the next morning, I had forgotten the accident. I wanted to go to school, see my friends, take that test, but I stayed at home.

I don't know how many trips I made to physicians or physiotherapists, how many pills I took, how many times I felt the stab of pain in places entirely different from my injuries. I feel almost guilty to admit that I was happy I was receiving this much attention from my family and friends. Family I had not heard from in ages called. Friends called, they brought balloons, flowers and cards.

I spent so many hours lying on the leather sofa, unable to read, unable to do anything requiring complex thinking. I had trouble

making decisions. One decision - to cross that street - had taken the rest of my ability to choose. I watched the sunlight bathing the window. Halfway through that week, I stopped feeling sorry for myself. I had been so selfish. The driver took over my thoughts completely. I must have ruined his day, terribly.

I never even saw his face. I wanted to apologize to my parents, my friends and the driver, everyone I had placed a burden on.

Before the collision, I had spent so much time obsessing over my lack of ability to choose what I got to do. Then the things I loved doing, and people I loved seeing, were taken away from me. It took awhile for me to realize how ungrateful I was before all of this. The collision has granted me the ability to be appreciative of simple things. It's also reassured me more than anything, that there are people that care about me, and that God has a plan for me.


Today, months later, the collision still limits me. From my recent trip to the hospital, I learned that I was the one in every 10 concussion patients that may have permanent effects. I can't think as well as I used to. I can barely remember little details. I can count a lot of people who think that my accident is over and done with, that I'm good now.

But how can I put into words what it's done to me? The physical scars, the pain, what it's done to my well-being, my future? I don't say anything to them.

My faith has strengthened, and I hate that it took this to do it, but nonetheless I'm grateful. I'm still reminding myself to put more effort into my relationships with people, to grasp onto memories in case they slip my mind. I've learned to become more aware of my choices - I had already experienced the feeling of being unable to choose. I'm starting to dream bigger, and to love, and live more. I haven't forgotten the feeling of what it was like to think I might not achieve my dreams, and to forget everything completely.

Despite the fact that February 28, 2008 never escapes my memory, I'm starting to live.





# I'm all that

By Teresa Kwon

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Researchers at Florida State University found that kids with very low self-esteem, also called self-derogation, were nearly twice as likely as other children to suffer drug dependence in early adulthood.
- Bath and beauty products company Dove polled 38,000 girls and women in 11 countries and found that more than 90 per cent of 15- to 17-year-olds want to change something about their physical appearance, usually their body weight.
- In 1999, *Teen People* magazine reported that research shows that messages girls receive from the media can damage their feelings of self-worth and negatively affect their behaviour.
- In 2001, San Diego State University researchers found that, in junior high school, boys' self-esteem recovers more quickly after a fall than girls'. Further, boys' self-esteem usually rises again in high school.
- If you want a quick test of your self-esteem (it's not meant to be diagnostic), try the one at *Discovery Health's* website: [http://discoveryhealth.queendom.com/self\\_esteem\\_abridged\\_access.html](http://discoveryhealth.queendom.com/self_esteem_abridged_access.html)
- Kids Help Phone: Call 1-800-668-6868 or visit [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**W**herever we go, the media surrounds us. Posters of tall and thin female or topless muscular male models are everywhere. And what's up with their seductive eyes? We can't help but gaze into them with awe. Sometimes we wish we were those models, to have their gorgeous figures and the overpowering confidence that we see in their eyes. Come on, admit to the envy.

Jood Wong, 17, of Calgary, has felt the sting of not measuring up physically. "All my life I have been dealing with low self-esteem. I was always put down and often people called me a fat kid," Jood says. "I did try to raise my self-esteem by doing things I love but how can I possibly do that when I am constantly discouraged?" For some people, confidence and high self-esteem come naturally. They seem born to be on the "it" list. But other people, like Jood, can't seem to boost up their self-esteem no matter what they try.

Dr. Allan Donsky, a professor in psychiatry and pediatrics at the University of Calgary, defines self-esteem as the view that you have of yourself, including how you compare yourself to others. "Teens struggle with self-esteem because of many reasons," says Dr. Donsky. "Constant criticism, life experiences, failing in areas of their lives... These are all part of what hinders the improvement of teen self-esteem. They may think that they don't have the skills they need to feel good, or they never feel good about themselves because they are perfectionists."

Confidence and self-esteem rarely come easily. We all understand that. But there are ways we can change in order to improve our self-esteem and begin feeling comfortable in our own skin. Dr. Donsky offers a few tips to help boost your self-esteem.

### Respect yourself

An important first step is self-respect. If you respect yourself, others will start to as well. Begin by listing reasons you should respect yourself. Maybe you have a great voice or you're a trendsetter at school. If you get stuck, then think about positive things that other people have said about you.

### Accept the flubs

Accept your past and present, and accept your strengths and weaknesses. Take yourself less seriously. Not everything goes as planned, and everyone makes mistakes now and again. Teens are human beings, after all.



# ALL THAT



AN UNDERPINNING OF THE FULFILLED LIFE IS  
A SOUND SENSE OF YOUR OWN WORTH.  
YOU CAN IMPROVE YOUR SELF-ESTEEM WITH  
A LITTLE PRACTICE

"Be realistic about yourself," says Dr. Donsky. "Stop comparing yourself to others. Notice the positives and let go of your past mistakes. The best way is to be generous to yourself. Become your own best friend. If you really have to, let go of friends who negatively influence you." If you made a mistake in the past, that's fine. Get over it. It's not the end of the world.

#### **Build confidence**

Confidence starts on the inside and develops from there. If you don't help develop confidence in yourself, then people won't recognize it. So whenever you wish to accomplish something, picture yourself there. Picture yourself successful and make it real in your mind. Fill your mind with the details – how it would feel, how you would behave and how others would respond to your success. Then put your vision into action.

#### **Celebrate success**

It is crucial to cherish your successes, no matter how small they are. It will definitely train your mind to learn that success is part of you. Whenever you are feeling down and can't seem to pick

up the pace, think about that moment when you achieved your goal. It will help to lift your spirits and get you back on track.

#### **Avoid perfectionism**

Trying your best and trying to be perfect are two different things. "Accept that nobody's perfect," advises Dr. Donsky. You can try to be perfect, but that would just bring on more stress and low self-esteem. One person may be a good artist while another is musically gifted. One may be a great athlete, and another, a talented writer. Everyone's unique, with different skills and talents.

#### **Fight the pessimism**

If you keep telling yourself negative things, of course you can't boost your self-esteem. If you really want to improve your confidence, you need to stay optimistic. Dispute your pessimistic beliefs. Think of misfortunes as temporary instead of permanent. Let them fly away. "Instead of telling yourself you're overweight, tell yourself to become healthy," Dr. Donsky says. "That's a more positive way to say it, and it gets you to work toward your goal of being healthy."

#### **Take your own journey**

Don't live your life for others. Realize that your life is a journey for you to take. Parents, friends and teachers are there to assist and guide you along. Your parents probably have some hopes in mind for you, and, until now, most of you have lived pretty much the way they wanted. They are adults and you know that they learned their life lessons already. However, your life is for you to live. Spend some time thinking through what you really want. Not in the short term, like an iPod or a fancy car, but a lifelong dream you want to achieve.

"Find that spark in you that gives you purpose and meaning," says Dr. Donsky. "Follow your heart and that way it will guide you. Sometimes teens have a hard time doing this because of all the criticism they get."

If any teen out there is severely struggling with self-esteem, the best way is to talk to someone. Seek help. Call Kids Help Phone or talk to your mentor. Speak up. That's part of being your own best friend. **g**



**W**hen I was about eight or nine, I remember walking into my bedroom and looking at the ceiling. The reason? Can't remember. But I looked. And, as cool as you please, there was a spider about the size of my pinky nail sitting on the wall about an inch from the ceiling.

I panicked, naturally.

I screamed bloody murder until my mother came running. When she asked me what was wrong, I don't remember what I told her. I do remember, however, her lugging up our ancient vacuum cleaner, which probably weighed about 10 pounds, just so she could suck it up and kill it.

Ridiculous? Absolutely! Irrational? Maybe not so much.

Dr. Allan Donsky is a child psychiatrist and an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Calgary. He took a few minutes to chat with me about fears and phobias and the motivation behind them.

"Fear is a more generalized term. Most anxiety is related to the feeling of fear. Phobias, however, are more specific. They are a specific fear of something, such as bugs or heights."

Fear isn't really the problem. Anxiety is the problem. Fears are like downsized anxiety disorders. When the fear becomes irrational, it becomes an anxiety disorder. "The point at which a fear or a phobia turns into a disorder is when it becomes completely restrictive,"

Dr. Donsky says. A phobia of bugs, for example, might prevent people from leaving the house in the summer. "Phobias are life-changing. But it's possible to overcome them."

If you do have a problem with a phobia or fear, there's treatment. However, treatment depends on whether or not you have a functional fear. A functional fear is when someone is scared for specific, and rational, reasons. For example, walking in the woods and being afraid of being attacked by a bear is a functional fear. Fear of writing a test is not.

"When fears start interfering with our minds, we must start conquering them. Before we can conquer a fear, we must ask if it's rational," says Dr. Donsky.

The fear and anxiety we feel typically provokes three responses. We can flee (try to avoid the thing we are afraid of at all costs), fight (become angry and oppositional when confronted with the object), or freeze (become paralyzed by our fear of the thing). The anxiety we feel when faced with our fears is caused by adrenaline. Adrenaline is what makes people panicky, shaky and want to run away. "Just

because adrenaline kicks in, doesn't mean there's real danger," Dr. Donsky says. "People begin to react to the adrenaline rush instead of the actual fear."

Anxiety might be the result of experience or genetics. "Many times there's no rational explanation," says Dr. Donsky. "There's a genetic component to fear and some people are more sensitive to it. In the base of our brain is a 'panic centre.' In some people, the alarm goes off too quickly." Some people are born worriers, or some have had a traumatizing life experience which gives root to fear.

Anxiety can lead to secondary problems, such as alcohol or drug abuse, social isolation, or depression. Still, the cycle that fear plays in our lives begins early.

According to Dr. Donsky, some general fears are first realized in the three-to-five age range. "It is in this age bracket that fears begin to develop; such as separation anxiety or a fear of strangers. When a child is aged five to 10, fears of things such as monsters, the dark, and burglars become rational."

These types of fears usually go away after a while. If they don't, they can become a problem in later life. Imagine a 20-year-old with separation anxiety.

"Anxiety is about a quality of life. Fears can

# ARE YOU OF THE

By Stephanie Smith

## WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

Here are some of the most common phobias, and a few unusual ones.

**Arachnophobia** – fear of spiders

**Aerophobia** – fear of flying

**Claustrophobia** – fear of enclosed or tight spaces

**Acrophobia** – fear of heights

**Brontophobia** – fear of thunderstorms

**Necrophobia** – fear of death or dead things

**Clinophobia** – fear of going to bed

**Coulrophobia** – fear of clowns

**Paraskavedekatriaphobia** – fear of Friday the 13th

**Haptophobia** – fear of being touched



HALLOWEEN IS FAST APPROACHING,  
AND THE HAIR ON THE BACK OF  
YOUR NECK MAY BE RISING. FIND  
OUT WHAT SCARES US, AND WHY

41



# 42 This is

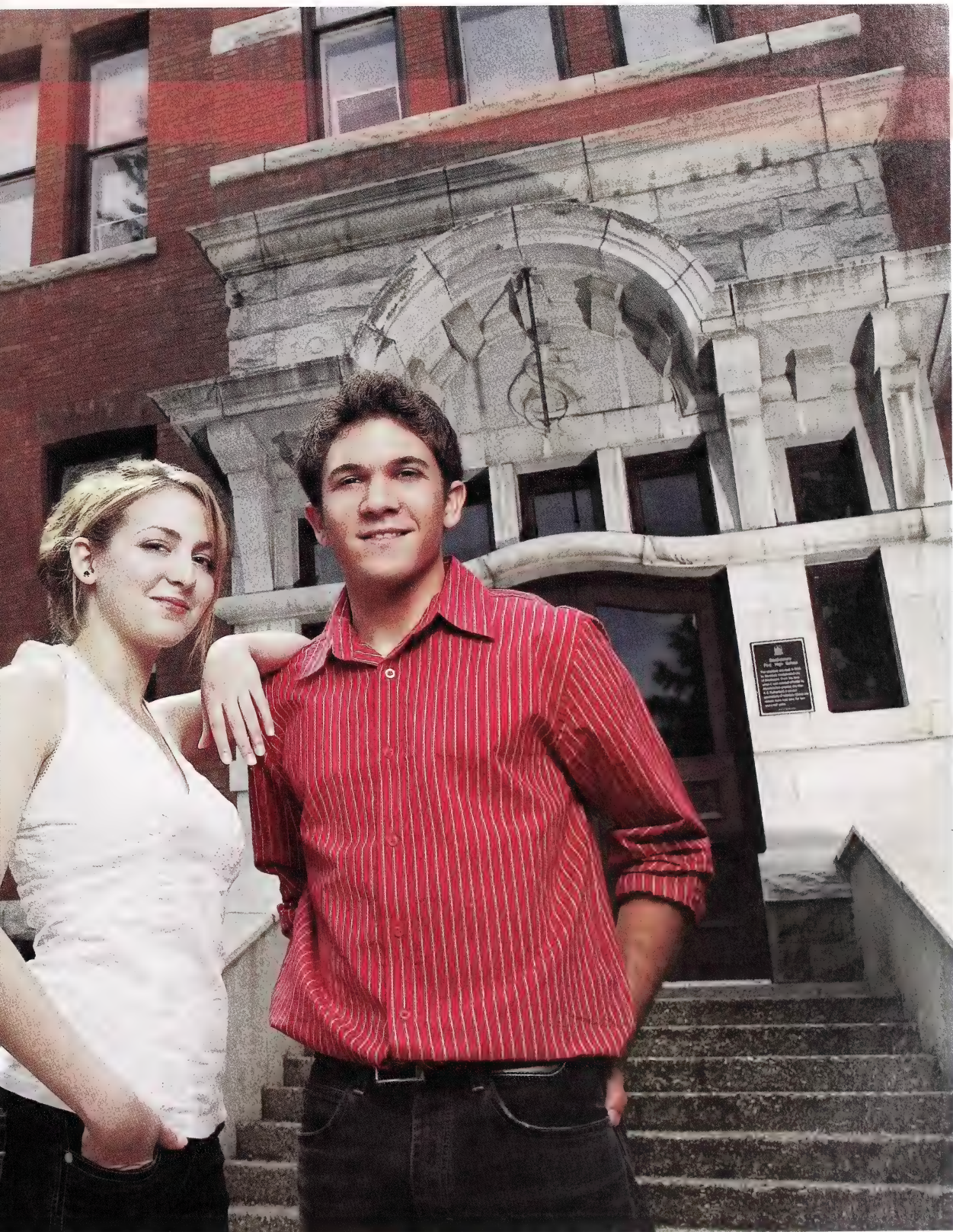
## Mustafa and Hazal Babadagli

By Vivian Lee Photography by 3 Ten

"Man, you're so smart. You're going to find the cure for cancer someday."

It's a strange sort of compliment, if you think about it; that a high level of intellect immediately turns you into a supposed gladiator in the battle against one of the worst diseases. Strange, but it's also heard often enough in high school grad speeches – "We could be the generation that finds the cure for cancer" – or parting yearbook messages – "Dude, go out and cure cancer! You're brilliant!"







The thing is, the key to this disease probably won't be found by one person alone. The massive amount of research in this and adjoining fields is overwhelming. It's all products of manpower from the minds of thousands of researchers, including two brilliant but still very much teenager-like 17-year-olds from Edmonton, Alberta.

Meet Mustafa and Hazal Babadagli, two teens who are constantly defying the odds. This one-of-a-kind fraternal twin pair is the real deal and last year, when they weren't cheering on their respective favourite rival club soccer teams from Turkey or bonding over an episode of *TLC's What Not To Wear*, they were constructing a non-viral vector, synthesized from a lipid polymer combo in the hopes of utilizing SiRNA to silence the gene expression of an MMP-2 enzyme.

Yeah, I know.

They are taking turns explaining the mechanics of cancer cell migration, finishing each other's sentences as twins sometimes do. They describe it as calmly and as easily as if they were detailing the day's weather.

Mustafa's easygoing voice and Hazal's gentle additions to her brother's answers lull you into thinking that you too could, if not place fourth out of 14 teams in the national level of the Sanofi-Aventis BioTalent Challenge, at least begin to understand what it means to do the work of graduate students while you're still in high school.

On the advice of their Grade 11 biology teacher, Cheryl Kachman, the twins first entered the Sanofi-Aventis BioTalent Challenge – geared towards promoting the interest of high school students in the field of biotechnology. Their mentor and family friend Dr. Hasan Uludag opened his university lab and put in time advising the pair. His grad students have since taken up similar projects.

Mustafa and Hazal investigated antioxidant levels in plants in the hopes of using those plants with the highest levels on connective tissue cancer cells. Their use of bay leaves reduced cancer cell counts by 50 per cent and scored them first place at the regionals and ninth at the nationals.

"This year, however, we wanted to do some-

thing a bit more sophisticated, something other people hadn't really done before," Mustafa explains. "Before, the project was a plant. There is some stuff in the plant that kills cancer cells. Find out what it kills. This year we took a lot more of a molecular approach."

In layman's terms, there is an enzyme known as MMP-2 which allows cancer cells to move around and into cells (imagine that MMP-2 is a battering ram). The enzyme works by degrading the extracellular matrix, a kind of fortress that can act to protect a cell. The twins wanted to

knowledgeable in cancer research and pharmaceuticals. They were thoroughly impressed.

Growing up in a family saturated with that left-brain talent has had a tremendous influence on the twins.

"We have a lot of family who are in the science field and we grew up with them and we are influenced by their work," Hazal says. "Also, our mom's a pharmacist, our dad's an engineer, and their support, along with the support of our granddad, who was a lawyer and judge, and our grandmother, who was a teacher, we have grown."

"Since our childhood, our parents have been subscribing to scientific magazines and so throughout the years we've read

**They are taking turns explaining the mechanics of cancer cell migration, finishing each other's sentences as twins sometimes do. They describe it as calmly and as easily as if they were detailing the day's weather.**

use an RNA molecule known as SiRNA to stop the production of the MMP-2 enzymes. The idea here is that if you stop cancer cells from moving around, you stop them from spreading and growing. However, cancer cells aren't just going to let SiRNA do what it pleases. The Babadagli duo had to go all Trojan horse. They created a delivery system for the SiRNA using a polymer which mimicked the surface of cancer cells and could attach to them.

The problem, and what proved to be the greatest challenge, was that there's a lot more going on than just MMP-2 enzymes. There are actually tons of MMP enzymes, and while their work was able to reduce MMP-2 levels, the dynamic duo was unable to reduce cancer cell migration because it turned out they targeted the wrong enzyme. But their work is significant. "We've created weapons of choice now that can target things in cancer cells," Mustafa says.

"And results, positive or negative, are results, right?"

One result was that the pair dominated the regionals again, and flew to Ottawa for three days to present their work to a panel of 20 judges,

them and our interest grows," adds Mustafa. This interest has resulted in the twins both wishing to pursue their careers with a scientific bent. This fall, Mustafa plans to take engineering and Hazal sciences at the University of Alberta.

"I feel science is really important, and I realize that 20 to 30 years ago women weren't as dominant in this field. I think that if more women enter science competitions and contribute, it'll raise awareness and presence," Hazal says. "Science is more creative than engineering. I want to go into pharmacy and maybe do a business degree on top of that. I like learning about different drugs and how they affect the body."

"I wanted to go into engineering because I saw it as a source of innovation. When we went into the biotech challenge, I saw this whole new world of opportunity, all available through engineering. I hope to combine it with maybe bio or med school. The brain also fascinates me: diseases such as Alzheimer's, dementia or Parkinson's and how they work," Mustafa says.

Although these two extremely ambitious individuals admit to a little friendly competition with their former womb mate, there's a sense that



they're not just siblings or lab partners, but really good friends.

"My brother is energetic, really cheerful, and practical. Sometimes he makes jokes that aren't very funny, and I tell him that but he doesn't understand," Hazal says, and concedes: "but he's a good brother."

"And Hazal is calmer than me, and hard-working," Mustafa says. "But one thing I don't like about her is she is very slow." He wants to get a reaction.

"He's trying to say I'm patient!" Hazal laughs.

"No, I mean she's slow. She makes me late for school."

It's hard to wrap one's head around all the school work, lab work and life work these two have had to juggle, especially when they were attending Old Scona Academic, one of the country's top public high schools. It's any wonder that they even get seven hours of sleep each night.

"Well, I had to finish a social essay on the way to Ottawa on the plane," Mustafa admits.

"And June was extremely busy. We were studying a lot for diplomas, as well as the May AP exams. I'd be lucky if I got those seven hours, but I guess it preps you for university," Hazal says.

And the pair is definitely about more than just their lipid polymer synthesizing prowess. Hazal plays the piano and swims twice a day on the beautiful beaches of Turkey, where the family vacations every summer. Mustafa is not at all squeamish about skipping school to watch his favourite club team in Turkey, and both are soccer fanatics.

She loves reading historical fiction and hanging with friends. He plays classical guitar. Both like eating Mac 'n' Cheese.

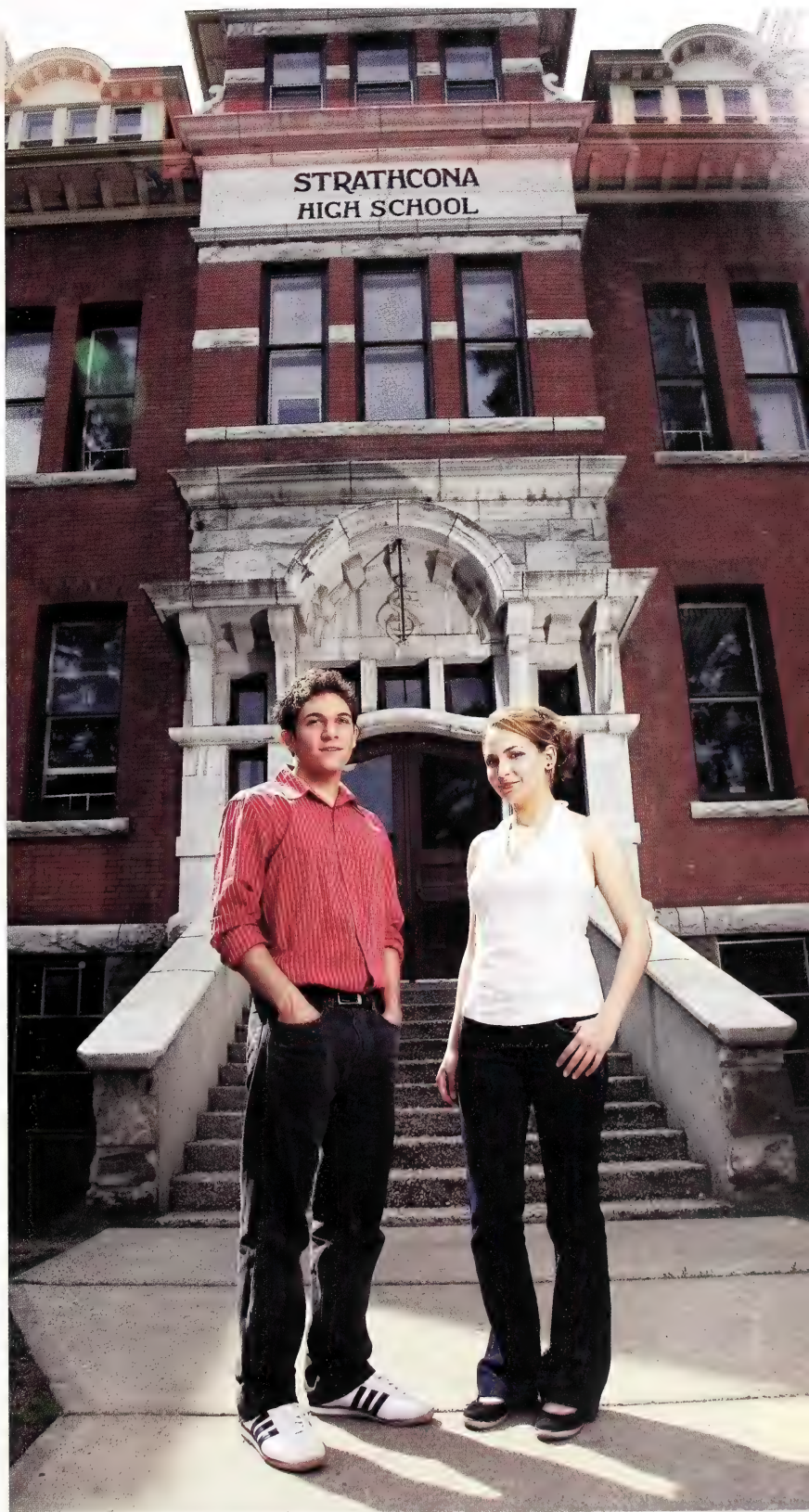
So they're just a couple of 17-year-olds, really. But, man.

If I were to write in their yearbook, it'd say this:

*Mustafa and Hazal Babadagli: Go out and cure cancer or Parkinson's or Alzheimer's someday. Go out and change the world with the brains and heart and passion you both possess in the tons.*

*Because if anyone can do it, it's you guys.*

*You're brill!* ☺





# Start Fresh

By Megan Ryland

**E**very student knows that the New Year doesn't start on January 1. No, although there are few party hats and little confetti or celebration, students know that the real New Year begins in the fall. The school calendar is the one that counts and this means that every autumn marks a fresh start and another chance to become the person you've always wanted to be.

So you've spent the summer kicking back and relaxing, or working hard to earn yourself some cash, with little time to think. But now that school's started it's time to get a few things straight. What do you want to accomplish this year? Last year doesn't count. It doesn't matter if you didn't end up trying out for the basketball team, or you couldn't get up the nerve to audition for the school play. Your slate is now clean; it's time to start fresh. But where to begin? The main question behind making changes this year is, "What will make this year better than last?" You know yourself better than anyone else, so why not take a moment and picture what you want the New Year to bring. It's a lot closer than you may think.

Once you know what you want, the next step is to make it happen. Taking the initiative for the first time is the hardest part, but completing your goals can be rewarding and inspire you to reach even greater heights. Your resolutions can be as individual as you are: like wanting to be more outgoing or finally signing up for singing lessons.

Other goals are more universal. Everyone wants to do well in school and we all have to get back into the groove of classes, homework and exams. This is the part many students dread, and where a few decisions can come in handy. Most students start the year with good intentions. Maybe last year you promised your parents you'd

Fall is the time to reinvent yourself, so get out your party hats, make resolutions and wish yourself Happy New (school) Year



# Fresh

keep your grades up, but when the choice between hanging out with your friends and studying came up, your pals won every time. This year can be different. It doesn't necessarily mean forgetting about your social life. Doing your work in advance, paying attention in class (as much as possible) and avoiding last-minute cramming will make your teachers happy and it'll keep your schedule flexible, because you won't be scrambling to finish assignments. Then you can really stretch your muscles with that new hobby or sport you always wanted to take up.

A common resolution is to try something new, whether it's joining a school team or meeting people. Most schools provide opportunities to broaden your horizons, all you have to do is investigate a little. Ask about sports teams, councils, productions and clubs you can join. These are also great ways to make friends and challenge yourself. Even trying out for something physically challenging is worth the experience, whether or not you make the final cut. So take a deep breath and go for it! If you think your school is missing something, create it yourself. You could make your own club and get to know other people who are passionate about the same things as you are. When your classes are nightmarish, as they sometimes are, extracurricular activities can give you a reason to show up.

Don't forget, in all your planning, to include some downtime for yourself, leaving days in your schedule to just hang out is important

too. Resolving to learn new skills or take up a new hobby is about making changes for the better, not driving yourself into the ground. If things get wild, remember that you're not alone. Your parents, teachers, school counsellors and even your classmates all have tips to keep you on track, because they're trying to juggle their resolutions, too. Completing a goal with someone by your side can make it a lot easier to stick with the program, so don't hesitate to recruit one of your friends. Also, don't worry if it occasionally seems a little overwhelming, some things are bound to happen that aren't part of the plan (but I bet you remember that part from last year.) Just grab a calendar, do a little planning, remember to manage your time, and you're ready to put your resolutions into practice.

When you hear the school bell go that first morning of classes, ringing in the New Year, remember it's not just a new teacher who's waiting for you. A new you is about to develop and he or she is waiting to find out how to become the person you've always wanted to be. ■

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF GOOD INTENTIONS

The practice of making a resolution to become a better person at the same time of the year, every year, dates back to the ancient religions, in which people ritually fasted, regretted their mistakes, and promised to do better.

**Spring fever:** Every spring, some Christians spend the 40 days of Lent fasting, praying and doing charitable works to compensate for a year filled with mistakes. Some people give up a vice or favourite activity during that time.

**Fall forward:** Every autumn, many Jews observe Yom Kippur, a strict day of rest and of fasting. They are forbidden to wear leather shoes, bathe, wear perfume or lotions and no marital hanky-panky. They may wear white to symbolize their newfound purity.

**Nine times:** In the ninth month of the Islamic calendar (in Canada, it's usually late fall or early winter), most Muslims are obliged to fast during the daytime every day for the entire month of Ramadan. This means no food, drink or marital hanky-panky while the sun's up. The faithful are also expected to refrain from violence, anger, envy, greed, lust, angry and sarcastic retorts, gossip, and must try to get along with each other.



In each issue of *Grip*, we feature creative works from our readers – poetry, personal essays, short stories, illustrations, comic strips and photography.



### 1, 2, 3...Now!

BY CANAAN NG

The perfect number  
And it's led me here  
Which is nowhere

They called me a hitchhiker  
Those men with carefully shaved faces  
In pickup trucks  
With shiny new licence plates

"Where you goin' old man?"  
Nowhere, and that's where I am

It took me seven years to get here  
But now, I'm not so sure

That this is where  
I want to be

At home (thousands of miles away)  
The trees keep their leaves  
Until November  
And the snow is warm  
And the smell  
Of freshly cut grass always  
Dances around your nose

But here,  
In September,  
The frost bites your face,  
Your hand  
Toes

And here,  
On this dark road  
In September,  
Is where  
I'm dying  
In September  
On this dark  
Road

### Dying on a dark road in September

BY KARYN WISSELINK

Here,  
In September  
The trees shake their leaves  
To the ground  
So the frost  
Can dress them  
In glittering diamonds

Here,  
In September  
I am standing  
On a road  
At 3 a.m.

It's dark  
And it's cold  
And I'm on a road  
That goes nowhere

I have followed it  
For seven years

### Oh Dear

BY KIANA LAHRING

We Are Not Impressed

By your tiny scritchings  
Your unnatural religion  
The way you hold your head  
And turn your back on a dime

Cynical as all hell  
You foolish Dear  
Nocturnal creature  
Saving my life



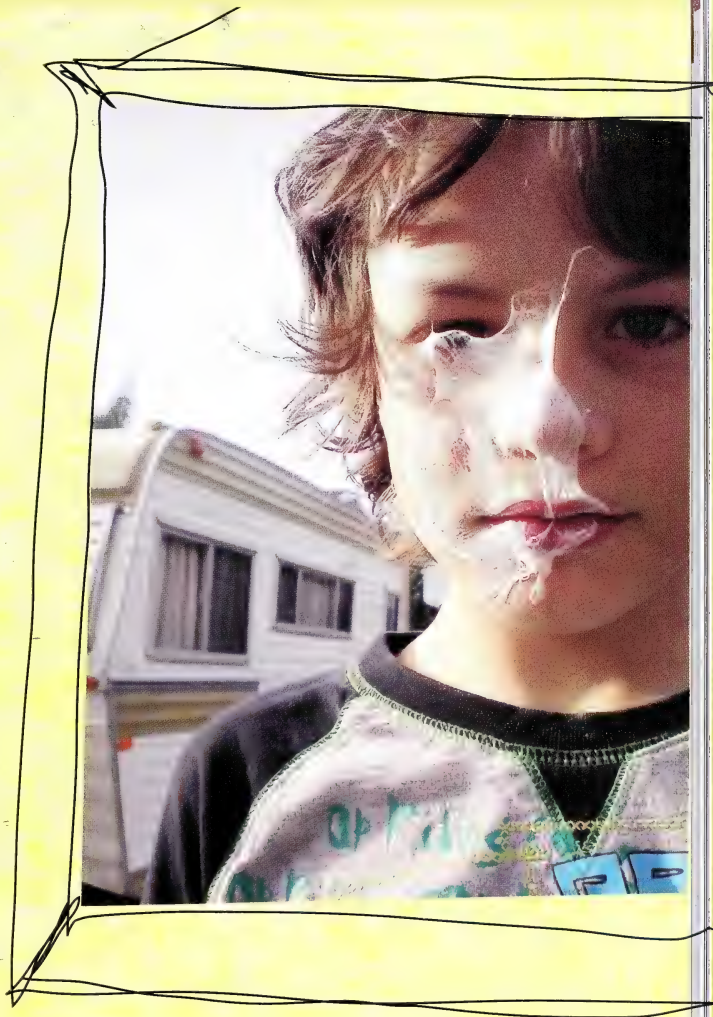
# Portfolio

Winning submissions are awarded \$50, are featured in the magazine and on the website at [www.griponlife.ca](http://www.griponlife.ca). Send in your submissions to [creative@griponlife.ca](mailto:creative@griponlife.ca)



## Just Do It

BY KENDALE REINDERS



## Kidding

BY JOSÉE GULAYETS



## Ever Forward

BY MACKENZIE VISSER

It was early Sunday morning. The bright sunlight that was reflecting off the white walls of the hospital room, for a moment, blinded the girl who rested in the bed. The flowers in a vase on the windowsill were beginning to droop. The air held a dry, starchy taste.

Kathleen eyed the plate of food that they had put beside her, and she chuckled at their persistence. She liked most of the nurses here, but she was stunned that they had not yet picked up on the fact that she would not, could not, touch her meal. That was why she was in this room, in this ward, in the first place. It had taken her long enough to admit it to herself; she had anorexia.

The girl lifted her arm, and stared at her bony wrist. She had never imagined that her habits would bring her this far, this close to... The word stuck in her throat: death. That is what the doctors had told her: that she was killing herself.

She knew the facts, she knew what she was doing to her own body, but, in a way she could hardly understand, it felt as if she were starving somebody else.

How was it that she came to be in this room? Kathleen thought about this for some time. Her obsession had started out as a simple resolution to lose a couple pounds. She had started jogging, and cutting out portions of her meals. A couple months, and the weight came off, and Kathleen had decided that she wanted to lose a little more. A little more led to a lot more, until her family started to get worried.

Kathleen was pulled from her thoughts as the doctor

came into the room.

"And how are we this morning, Kathleen?" she asked in an artificial and overenthusiastic voice.

Kathleen did not know why, but she did not like this lady. She looked at her as if she was the disease, and no longer a human being, but perhaps that was all she had become. Indeed, her life had been consumed, her efforts funnelled into a single purpose.

The doctor fumbled around with some charts. The bright yellow band on her arm had caught Kathleen's eye. It was one of those LIVESTRONG bracelets. She remembered the lady who had come to her school a couple years ago, trying to fundraise for cancer. Hundreds of the armbands had been bought up by the students, enthralled by the message of Lance Armstrong and his determination to persevere.

Kathleen sighed in vexation. Determination was not all it was cracked up to be; she was the perfect example of that. How was it that one person could be so admired for such a trait, and another, such as herself, to be condemned for it? A monkey could have answered her own question, Kathleen realized. Obviously there were vast differences between her and Lance Armstrong; she was in a hospital room, destroying herself, while he was touring France on a bicycle. Yet there were similarities as well. Both had devoted themselves to a single goal, and both had met their goals through tremendous self-sacrifice.

How had things gone so wrong? When had she let herself go? Kathleen could not answer this herself, but she could easily admit to herself the problems her own determination had caused.

Determination was not the evil that plagued her life, but it was the catalyst. It had been her own fortitude she wielded, that had brought her to her deprived state. It was not her raw willpower that was destroying her, but how she decided to use it. A simple thought struck Kathleen. If she had made a conscious decision to starve herself, she could also resolve to do the opposite. Perhaps there was hope. Perhaps she could strive to be healthy, instead, both mentally and physically. She could do it with as much gusto as she had used to bring herself down. No, it was not her determination that had brought her here, but how she had decided to use it, and the choice was still up to her.

Her willpower ensured that she would arrive at the destination of her choosing. All her efforts would go towards this, but it was still up to her, and that is why she better decide carefully, Kathleen figured. Because whatever she did, it would be finished completely.

## Paved Heart

BY JOSÉE GULAYETS

## Mr. Sherman

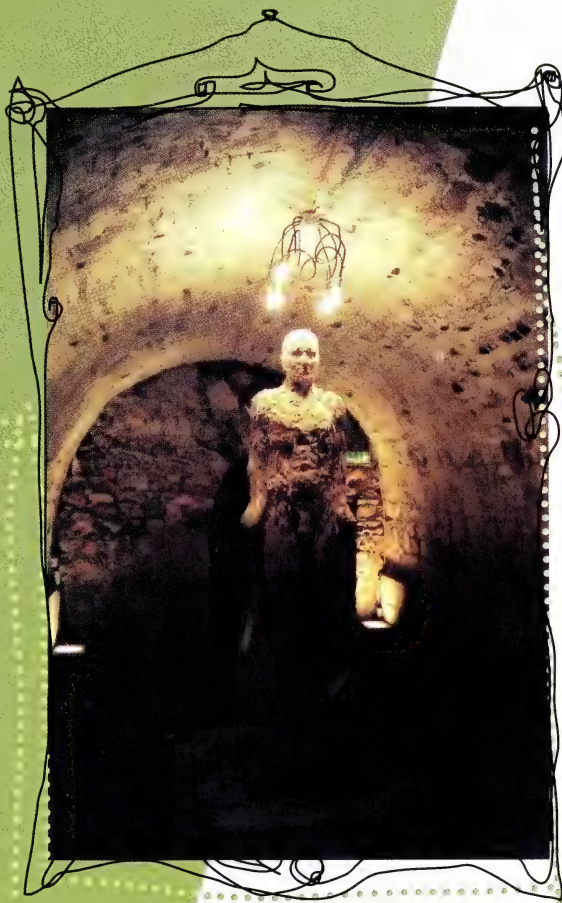
BY ANIKA HAROON





## Catacomb Chandelier

BY KIANA K LAHRING



### Grey

BY KARYN WISSELINK

Hundreds of tiny grey moths  
cluttered around the light  
trying to keep  
warm.

Feathery wings, fluttering  
once, twice  
the breeze from an open door  
will not shake them  
from their comforting  
resting place.

But do not wander any closer  
for the light will become  
dangerous and deadly.

Acrid smells fill the air  
musty smoke drifting  
through the keyholes and  
shattered windows.

Tremble with cold  
or tremble with fear  
blown away by harsh  
winter winds.  
Tiny frozen  
fairy wings.  
On this dark  
Road

### Solitary

BY ANIKA HAROON

As the moon shines upon the river,  
Shadows reflect on it like a mirror,  
The starry sky glows like a lantern,  
And the wind whispers in my ear,  
Tells me the pristine stories of the past years.

I imagine myself, a solitary bird,  
Who takes flight into the depths of a silent heart,  
Silver teardrops trickle upon the grass  
And my scattered dreams slowly cover in rust.

My tears stream away in an ocean full of sorrow,  
I fly up above the sky and look below  
The world is draped in darkness  
And I continue my journey towards an unknown address.

### They Said

BY CALLA WRIGHT

Be original,  
they said.  
And so  
I wrote about the time  
I vacationed inside Jonah's whale.

Use your imagination,  
they said.  
And so  
I drew on the walls, because my imagination  
is bigger than one piece of paper.

Bring yourself to the music,  
they said.  
And so

Up here  
I sang,

And over here

And down here

They said:  
"Made up."

They said:  
"Vandalism."

They said:  
"Disruption."

They said,  
be unique  
but not different.





# When Words Fall Short

**Art therapy relies on the creative process to foster self-understanding. Here's how it works**

By Scaachi Koul

**D**rawing a picture, singing a song, writing a poem: they're some of the ways kids manage problems, without judgment, without worry. When we were little, a notepad and a handful of Crayolas were like therapy. But somehow, we lost that creative release in our rush to mature.

There are many kinds of therapy out there, and art therapy taps into that elemental urge to create. It actually takes you back to the way you once made sense of the world – and you don't even need to know how to paint, draw or sketch. The Canadian Art Therapy Association describes art therapy as combining “the creative process and psychotherapy, facilitating self-exploration and understanding. Using imagery, colour, and shape as part of this creative therapeutic process.”

“We use everything from soapstone carvings, different fibre art, collage, sculpting, and writing as a way for people to express the experience,” says Dr. Marilyn Hundleby, art therapist at the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton. She has worked in art therapy for 13 years, founding the Arts in Medicine program, in which she and her colleagues use a number of art forms to help people address the challenges that come with cancer. This therapy calls on the many art forms to express oneself when dealing with different trials. “Sometimes,” she says, “there are no words.”

While Dr. Hundleby's specialty is people affected by cancer, she says that just about anyone can take advantage of art therapy. It's useful for anyone facing challenges or difficulties. “It can be a great way to express some of the thoughts, the feelings, that are sometimes too difficult to put into words,” she continues. “When we're younger, we have more of a connection with using other forms of expression, and when we're creating, conversation flows more easily.” It's for anyone, at any age, dealing with a problem they need some support for.

A typical art therapy session can involve several patients in a group setting and lasts about two hours. Some therapists will start with a meditation and focus on breathing, then the group will start with whatever art form they choose. “People create,” Dr. Hundleby explains, “and then they do some writing about the process, which takes them a little deeper into what they've created.” The group will also share with each other the writing they've done and the thoughts they've had to further understand what they're going through.

Art therapy complements other forms of therapy that usually consist of talking about issues or problems. Art offers “a universal language,” Dr. Hundleby explains, allowing participants a greater understanding of themselves without jargon or complications.

“No matter where you go in the world, if you see an image or hear music or see a photograph, something is communicated without any words being used.”

Art therapy can allow some people to reconnect with the innocence of youth in order to understand their older, more complicated selves. “When we're kids, we take that time to play, to create, and as we get older, we don't have the time. Or maybe once someone made us feel we didn't do a good enough job colouring a picture. That creativity gets shut down, but there's a wealth of wisdom that just comes from tapping into it.”

## Get your brushes out

If you're interested in taking part in a little art therapy or just learning more about it, there are a few places to look.

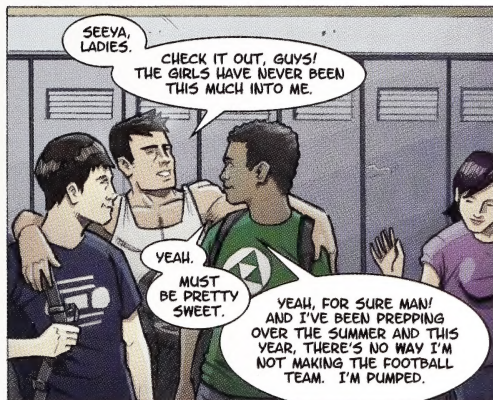
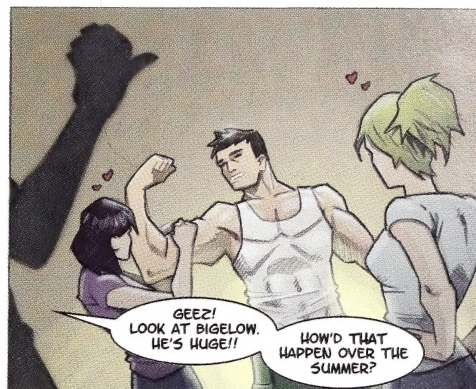
- The Canadian Art Therapy Association lists registered members by province: [www.catainfo.ca](http://www.catainfo.ca)
- Department of Psychosocial and Spiritual Resources at Edmonton's Cross Cancer Institute: 780-432-8763. Other hospitals have art therapy programs, too.
- *You Can't Make Me Talk*: a book about lean art therapy by therapist Janice Carroll, illustrated by 13- to 19-year-olds.





# DODGE

- ILLUSTRATED BY ERIC GRAVEL -



LATER IN THE WEEK...





# Last Word

## A graphic love story

By Kristina Fithern-Stiele  
Illustration by Rodrigo López Orozco

No one and nothing will ever tear me away from my graphic novels, &%\$)^#!

**D**oesn't the number 72

have such a lovely ring to it? I think so. Why does a 16-year-old girl-chick like me love it so much, when there are so many other decimal points in life? It's because 72 is the number of graphic novels in my personal collection. The most recent addition was the premiere edition of *Runaways: Dead End Kids*, by Joss Whedon and illustrated by Michael Ryan. When I bought it, I had to restrain myself from reading the whole thing at once. How did I manage to hold back? Sheer force of will. I have to savour each moment and not gobble up the latest issue in one go.

But I admit, sometimes I lack the strength. I'll just plough right through a new GN in one afternoon. It took me four hours to read Marvel's *Spider-Man Loves Mary Jane*, by Sean McKeever and illustrated by Takeshi Miyazawa. OK, it wasn't a huge graphic novel, not as big as *Spider-Man: Back in Black*, by a handful of writers and illustrators, which I finished in two days. If it wasn't for limited resources, (I don't make that much money and my puny bedroom won't do) I'd have shelves, shelves and shelves of graphic novels. They'd be everywhere; all the way up to the ceiling. I would even consider having my own store, except I would never open my

doors for business and never sell anything.

Where did this time-consuming preoccupation come from? I'm not sure, but I don't think of it as a negative thing. Oh sure, I spend a lot of time reading graphic novels, but I also appreciate a lot of things about them that are positive. As a writer myself, I can appreciate the creative genius that goes into making the storyline and illustrations. Graphic novel scripts look bitchingly hard to make. Not only do the writers have to write page one, panel one and describe what is happening to the artist in detail so he can visualize the action and draw it, but the artist also has to collaborate with the writer to make sure both on the same page. To make it more complicated, as with *Spider-Man: Back in Black*, sometimes there's a team of writers and illustrators on one project.

The creative process, and the resulting conceptualized work, draws me to GNs like a moth to a flame. I find them amazing, intriguing, gripping and fun. They take me on a trip that doesn't end with the turning of the last page. I haven't found anything else that moves me this much, and believe me, I've tried.

Another thing I like about GN's is the way the characters swear. Do you think graphic novels represent a passing phase that I will outgrow? #@&^\*! no! Like I said before, 72 is just a numerical stop in a long journey to the end of time. ☐





# TALK TO THE HAND!

**Smooth Operator** presents the new **BlackBuried Palm™**, the cellphone that's surgically implanted into your hand.

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**Winner!**  
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